



ANNUAL REPORT 2016–17





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2016–17



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Guides to ABS services, and other selected documents, including a comprehensive range of ABS statistics are available on the ABS website www.abs.gov.au

The 2016–17 ABS Annual Report can be found at www.abs.gov.au





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Australian Statistician

The Hon Michael McCormack MP
Minister for Small Business

Dear Minister for Small Business

I am pleased to present the annual report for the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 2017.

This report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the PGPA Act). Section 46 of the PGPA Act requires that an annual report be given to the entity's responsible Minister for presentation to the Parliament.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the PGPA Rule and includes the ABS's audited financial statements in accordance with subsection 43(4) of the PGPA Act as well as ABS's annual performance statement in accordance with subsection 39(1) of the PGPA Act.

In addition, and as required by Section 10 of the PGPA Act, I certify that the ABS has:

- prepared fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans
- in place appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation and reporting mechanisms that meet the needs of the ABS
- taken all reasonable measures to appropriately deal with fraud relating to the ABS.

Yours sincerely

David W. Kalisch

08 September 2017

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Access to all ABS documents (including the ABS Annual Report) and statistics are available through the ABS website **www.abs.gov.au**

For any queries about statistical information, contact the National Information and Referral Service from anywhere in Australia between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday on **1300 135 070** (from Australia) International clients may call +61 2 9268 4909.

Alternatively, you can email your query to **client.services@abs.gov.au**

For media requests contact Communications & Dissemination Branch on 1300 175 070.

The ABS has offices in every state and territory as listed below

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Sydney	Level 8, 44 Market Street Sydney NSW 2000	GPO Box 796 Sydney NSW 2001
Melbourne	Level 3, 818 Bourke Street Docklands VIC 3008	GPO Box 2796 Melbourne VIC 3001
Geelong	Level 2, 12 Gheringhap Street Geelong VIC 3220	PO Box 4459 Geelong VIC 3220
Brisbane	295 Ann Street Brisbane QLD 4000	GPO Box 9817 Brisbane QLD 4001
Adelaide	Level 9, ANZ House 11 Waymouth Street, Adelaide SA 5000	GPO Box 2272 Adelaide SA 5001
Perth	Level 1, The Durack Centre 263 Adelaide Terrace, Perth WA 6000	GPO Box K881 Perth WA 6842
Hobart	200 Collins Street Hobart TAS 7000	GPO Box 66 Hobart TAS 7001
Darwin	Level 3, Civitas Building 22 Harry Chan Avenue, Darwin NT 0800	GPO Box 3796 Darwin NT 0801
Canberra	Ground Floor, ABS House 45 Benjamin Way, Belconnen ACT 2617	Locked Bag 10 Belconnen ACT 2616

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SECTION ONE OVERVIEW



Chapter 1

Australian Statistician's review



The importance of the ABS and the public value of our work



Our statistical information provides a window into the complex and changing nature of life in Australia: our society, economy and environment. They form the bedrock of evidence for business, policy, research and political decision-making as well as the evaluation of government program and service delivery.

The production of nationally consistent, timely and trusted official statistics has been the focus of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and its predecessor, the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, for more than 110 years.

The ABS has an enduring, strong and intrinsic value proposition to inform important decisions. Throughout 2016–17, the ABS continued to deliver reliable information to inform decisions on matters that affect everyone in Australia. We released almost 500 statistical products, had more than 16 million visits to the ABS website and enabled about 2.5 million data downloads. We also made it easier than ever before to find important data – key economic indicators, Census data and social statistics – through ongoing website improvements, the ABS Stats app and increased use of our secure DataLab facility.

The breadth and depth of the quality statistical information produced by the ABS and its value for decision-making across Australia is considerable. In the economic arena, ABS data is used every day to guide the operations of governments – from informing the Reserve Bank's interest rate decisions, to assisting the Australian Government in its fiscal policy settings and understanding of policy impacts and outcomes. ABS population demographics are critical for both government funding distributions and for planning by state and local government. Business investment decisions also rely on accurate, timely and relevant data from the ABS.

The ABS also produces statistical information relevant to many areas of social concern. In October 2016 we released information from the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, and in April 2017 we followed up with a comparative analysis of disability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people, as part of the evidence base for the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) 'closing the gap' commitment.

The ABS has continued to provide extensive, timely and quality statistical information on this wide range of important matters over the past year. We have achieved this in the context of declining operating resources, fragile and ageing systems (that are largely being replaced through funding over a five year period), and expanding information demands from government, stakeholders and the general public. Our challenge is to transform while at the same time measuring an increasingly complex environment with significantly less resources than previous years or comparable national statistical organisations.

Our main strategic focus of the ABS is to maximise public value from the resources we receive. We do not have sufficient resources to do everything our stakeholders would like, so we need to make judgements about what we do. We assess this through five competing lenses of: the provision of quality and timely national statistics; producing new statistical insights that have contemporary relevance; enabling effective, safe use of ABS data; capturing our data as efficiently as possible, minimising the burden placed on our households and businesses; and continuing to build ABS capability for statistical challenges that the ABS will need to meet in the future.

Despite these challenges, I am confident that the ABS can and will deliver considerable public value and continue to inform important decisions.

2016 Census: Lessons and results

The ABS conducts a Census of Population and Housing every five years as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. As agreed in 2012, the 2016 Census adopted a 'digital-first' approach to data collection. Australia's first 'digital-first' Census made it easier and faster for the ABS to process and produce a higher-quality data set. It was also more efficient and consistent with public expectations of dealing with government through accessible digital means. Despite the website outage on Census night, there was an increased online response rate in 2016 which saved taxpayers more than \$100 million.

The headline indicators for the success of the 2016 Census were an overall response rate of 95.1%; an online response rate of 63.3% (up from 37.9% in 2011) and a net undercount of 1.0% (down from 1.7% in the 2011 Census). Targeted communication and collection strategies also led to increases in the coverage of some population cohorts. Designed to ensure everyone could participate fully and easily, the ABS reached out to people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In another first for the ABS, an Independent Assurance Panel was established to assess the quality of 2016 Census data and build trust in the quality of the ABS data following the eCensus outage. Professor Sandra Harding (Chair, Independent Assurance Panel) spoke at the 2016 Census data release at Old Parliament House on 27 June 2017.

She said that the Panel had 'determined that the 2016 Census data is of comparable quality to 2011 and 2006 Census data and comparable to international benchmarks'.

The Panel concluded that 'the 2016 Census data is fit-for-purpose, it is useful and useable, and will support the same variety of uses as has been the case for previous Censuses'.

It also made this observation on the quality of 2016 Census data:

'While challenges were experienced and should be addressed for the 2021 Census, the changed approach led to a more efficient, effective and modern Census operation. The Panel strongly supports the changed approach to the Census and its further refinement in order to secure a high quality and financially sustainable Census into the future'.

The ABS has almost completed implementing the recommendations of the MacGibbon Review, providing impetus to accelerate reform and help us address key issues of importance to both the Government and the broader community. Many of the things we have learned from the 2016 Census, alongside international developments, are contributing to reformed governance arrangements, strategy and practices as we start to prepare for the 2021 Census. We have also used the opportunity to take stock and embed new dimensions into our communication, cultural change program, training, policies and procedures.

Forward Work Program deliverables

Our tight resource environment affects our Forward Work Program. In 2016 the ABS indicated that difficult decisions around prioritisation of statistical products from 2017–18 would be required. Since this time we have undertaken extensive consultation with stakeholders on this prioritisation.

The view of our key data users is that our appropriation from Government is focused on the highest priority collections. These include economic, demographic, statistical infrastructure and household expenditure and income surveys. There is little in our current program that does not satisfy strong user need. Importantly some of our important statistical outputs, especially some key social statistics, are only possible through significant user funding. It also means that some high demand statistical collections, such as time use and mental health, cannot be undertaken within existing ABS resources. We will also be looking to find money within our existing budget for some priority statistical enhancements, particularly in the economic statistics program.

The ABS Forward Work Program for 2017–18 will be released in a separate document (ABS cat. no. 1006.0).

Enhancing Australia's statistics

As Australia's national statistical agency, the ABS is constantly exploring and testing new methodologies, new data sources and approaches in collaboration with the public, private, community and the academic sectors. This engagement is intended to increase the value of what statistical information we deliver to the Australian community.

Over the past year we have taken more steps to modernise ageing systems and processes and to develop the statistical capabilities required for a modern national statistical office. This will continue for a number of years to come.

We have developed a new framework for Labour Account figures that will enable the use of existing labour market data from diverse sources. For the first time, a new Australian Labour Account will provide information on the number of jobs – both main and secondary – for the 19 industry divisions available for each of the years from 2010–11 to 2015–16. The ABS's inaugural experimental labour accounts was released on 25 July 2017 (ABS cat. no. 6150.0.55.001).

Significant enhancement to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) will be implemented in the December quarter 2017. These enhancements are the result of research, innovation and extensive consultation with international experts and key stakeholders during 2016–17. They will deliver a more accurate measure of household inflation by updating consumer spending patterns each year and increasing the use of transactions data from large Australian retailers. These enhancements will better capture consumer substitution of goods and services purchased.

We will continue to work with other government data to enable deeper insights for policy, research and statistical purposes, maximising the value of this public data.

Protecting the privacy of Australians

The continued trust and support of our survey respondents and information providers is critical to the ABS. We maintain the secrecy of the information provided to us, as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, while also ensuring that we meet the additional requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988*. This is a core value of the ABS – for me, my senior team and all ABS staff members. For example, in preparation for the release of 2016 Census data in June 2017, the ABS tested its front line web services to make sure they would be usable, secure and suitably robust to handle the expected public interest and protect it from the effects of any malicious activity such as a distributed denial of service attack.

Having learned our lessons from Census night, we simulated a series of real life attacks in collaboration with technology partners based in Canada, Bangalore, Jamaica and Australia.

The simulations demonstrated that the ABS was able to respond and manage the risk of an attack on the ABS website, even where our service provider was not able to fully mitigate an attack. This provided assurance that we were prepared for the Census data release – a confidence shown to be justified in the smooth release of Census data on 27 June 2017.

Enhancing Australian Government data integration capabilities

Australians and Australian businesses supply a considerable amount of information through surveys and other means to governments and other organisations. Through data integration – safely bringing information from different sources together for statistical and research purposes – the ABS is producing new statistical insights, without adding to the reporting burden on households and businesses.

Over the past decade, the ABS has invested in the capability and expertise to bring data together safely and securely to produce statistical information. The ABS has been an Accredited Integrating Authority under Commonwealth arrangements since 2012, and has extensive experience over many years integrating data from a range of sources, including ABS surveys, Census information and administrative data in social and economic spheres. Administrative data is not collected for statistical purposes and requires significant effort to make it suitable for policy research and evaluation. The ABS has expertise and experience to integrate and manage administrative data so that reliable statistics on Australian households and businesses can be produced.

This has led to the development of a suite of integrated data resources and the production of research findings that guide policy and improve the well-being of Australians, including:

- the **Australian Census Longitudinal Dataset** (ACLD) – which has shown that automotive workers across Australia were generally highly mobile, with nearly half of those employed in 2006 employed in another industry in 2011
- the **Business Longitudinal Analytical Data Environment** (BLADE) – which has shown that young, small and medium enterprises contribute disproportionately to job creation
- the **Multi-Agency Data Integration Project** (MADIP) – which has shown that the level of educational attainment affects labour force participation and retirement outcomes for individuals at retirement age.

The ABS, in partnership with other government departments, played a key role in initiating and progressing the development of the Data Integration Partnership for Australia (DIPA) proposal. The DIPA is a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to collecting, analysing and using existing public data, safely and securely, to provide new insights on complex policy issues. It builds on the Commonwealth Public Sector Data Management Agenda. It was allocated \$130.8 million in funding over three years as part of the 2017–18 Federal Budget.

The ABS has been allocated \$37.7 million in DIPA funding over three years as the primary Integrating Authority for the Australian Government. Our job, in collaboration with the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare and other agencies that collect information, is to create an evidence base which informs government decisions. The ABS will build on existing integrated data resources and enhance the value of these resources through expanding the range of data to enhance its usefulness.

The DIPA initiative is a government partnership, and the ABS is designing its contribution together with policy agencies, to generate new insights for governments and the community. These insights will improve the ongoing development of government policies, program design and evaluation and lead to more effective delivery of government services.

Ongoing ABS transformation

The ABS is a complex business operation. Its statistical program encompasses economic, industry, population, social and environmental dimensions; it has diverse data capture arrangements and it operates from ten locations across Australia.

The ABS's ambitious transformation agenda is arguably the most significant and comprehensive change in our history. Beginning in 2014–15 it is underpinned by an investment of \$257 million to modernise infrastructure over five years through the Statistical Business Transformation Program (SBTP). The transformation is essential for the continued production of timely, relevant and quality statistical information required to inform decisions in a rapidly changing world.

ABS transformation goals

- Our **environment** – we collaborate with stakeholders to understand and respond better to the current and future external environment.
- Our **strategy** – our strategies enable rigorous statistics, strong partnerships and effective use of resources.
- Our **governance** – our governance supports responsive decision-making, prioritisation and management of enterprise risk.
- Our **people** – we have a diverse, expert, motivated and agile workforce.
- Our **culture** – we are high performing, aligned, engaged, innovative and accountable.
- Our **infrastructure** – our infrastructure is effective, efficient and adaptable.

In this, the second year of our transformation, we have already delivered significant improvements. Importantly, the ABS is working more collaboratively and constructively, drawing upon the skills and perspectives we have across the organisation, as well as working much more effectively with our partner agencies and key stakeholders.

More specifically, the past 12 months has seen the ABS:

- develop a new stakeholder and relationship management plan to enable better and more consistent collaboration and support to our key stakeholders and government
- deliver key foundational infrastructure that will underpin improvements to our statistical systems as part of SBTP
- develop and begin to implement a cultural enhancement strategy that will lead to better engagement with our staff and improve our ability to harness their abilities, capacity and diversity.

The greatest gains from our transformation agenda are still to come. The next 12 to 18 months will see the ABS implementing and integrating new systems and new information architecture to support our vision. The vision includes better statistical systems, improved processes and increased access to statistical information in ways that protect the secrecy and privacy of people's information and information from businesses.

Building trust and confidence in our statistics is another critical dimension of our transformation. We have allocated additional resources to statistical risk management to ensure data quality and timeliness. Key economic and population statistics have been a particular focus for our statistical risk management this past year, with the ABS delivering quality statistics across our entire work program.

Another part of building this trust and confidence is improving the way we communicate statistical information. The ABS has dedicated additional resources to improve our communication with the media, stakeholders and the wider Australian community. We have also undertaken market research to better understand public and stakeholder perceptions of the ABS and the work we do – in particular the Census and our data integration program. I am confident this work will position the ABS to continue to be an internationally respected provider of official statistics, but also to become a better communicator of statistical information.

Looking ahead

The ABS faces a range of challenges into the future including:

- delivering official statistics in an 'information age' where there is increasing pressure to deliver more statistical information, more quickly and in more creative ways
- operating in an environment where obtaining information from households and businesses is becoming more difficult
- likely further reductions in our resources due to the prevailing fiscal pressures.

These challenges are not unique to the ABS. At international conferences I've attended, it is clearly apparent that in a rapidly changing and evolving environment, national statistical organisations share many similar challenges.

In response to these demands and the inevitable tensions they create, the ABS is constantly examining and reconsidering the breadth of its statistical program, the ways it provides access to statistical information for research, policy and statistical purposes and the way it communicates statistical insights on our society, our economy and our environment. We also make greater use of existing administrative data through our data integration program, limiting expensive and intrusive data collection where possible.

There will continue to be complex decisions to be made around information use and requirements, data acquisition, dissemination, the privacy and security of data along with the potential integration of new information sources. The ABS operates, and will continue to operate, in a rapidly changing information landscape.

I have confidence that the ABS will continue to rise to these challenges and deliver reliable trusted information that is essential for informed decision-making in Australia.



Transforming the ABS 2016–17

Consolidated list of transformation achievements

ENVIRONMENT	STRATEGY	GOVERNANCE
<p>Updated the ABS Engagement Strategy and Relationship Management Plan – promotes best practice in partnerships.</p> <p>Working closely with stakeholders to improve ABS's understanding of the future of official statistics.</p> <p>Contributed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the COAG Data Transparency Taskforce on transparency of data on government spending and performance of government initiativesimproving the quality of the Consumer Price Index by using scanner dataunderstanding how satellite imagery data, telematics data, export transactions data and smart meter data can be used in the production of official statisticsChief Methodologists' Network (international)international statistical standards and prioritiesthe Task Team established by the UN Statistical Commission in the use of satellite imagery data for producing agriculture statistics. <p>Continued external engagement with key government stakeholders to improve relationships and understand changing policy requirements.</p> <p>Contributed to and responded to government inquiries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">MacGibbon ReviewSenate inquiry on 2016 CensusProductivity Commission inquiry into data availability and use. <p>Increased media and social media engagement to raise awareness of importance of ABS statistics.</p> <p>Qualitative Market Research (2016 and 2017) – gauge community views on the ABS to inform future communication activities.</p>	<p>ABS Corporate Plan, Portfolio Budget Statement & Forward Work Plan setting clear direction for the future and contributing to better prioritisation of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">focus on ABS informing important decisions. <p>Transforming Statistics program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">use of Address Register and Business Register to improve sample efficiencyAgricultural Census reduces data collection burden on smaller farmsresearch, innovation and extensive consultation drives significant enhancements to the CPI and development of new Labour Force Accounts experimental estimates. <p>Successful 2016 Census data release:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">95.1% overall response rate63.3% online response rate1.0% (down from 1.7%) under-count. <p>The Independent Assurance Panel concluded 2016 Census data is fit-for-purpose and can be used with confidence.</p> <p>Centre of Excellence, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics and Community Engagement established.</p>  <p>\$37.7 million in funding for ABS Data Integration Partnership for Australia (DIPA) – brings ABS data together with administrative, transactional and other data to provide new statistics relevant to policy decisions.</p>	<p>Evolving, flexible organisational structure and new governance structures established to support ABS transformation goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Economic Statistics Advisory Group (ESAG)Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group (PSSAG)Executive Board and committees established – People, Finance & Resource Prioritisation, Network Services, Security, Census 2021 Program Board. <p>Expanded independent advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Australian Statistics Advisory Council – broader membership and Gary Banks AO appointed as Chairestablished the Independent Census Assurance Panel to independently review and assure the quality of statistical outputs from the 2016 Census.  <p>Microdata Access Policy review providing better access to microdata for government officials particularly within a safe and secure data environment.</p> <p>Action to improve the Enterprise and ABS Risk Management Frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">appointment of a Chief Risk Officer and establishment of the Risk, Planning and Policy Branch to focus support on risk managementdeveloping a new risk management strategy, including revising the framework and improving capabilityenhanced approach to Statistical Risk Management. <p>Updated internal policies reflecting principles-based approaches with internal audit completed to improve delegations at appropriate levels.</p>



Transforming the ABS 2016–17

Consolidated list of Transformation achievements

PEOPLE	CULTURE	INFRASTRUCTURE
<p>Greater staff mobility – exposing staff to experiences outside the ABS and bringing fresh perspectives to the organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-postings • staff exchanges underway to Commonwealth, state and territory government departments • greater diversity and professional expertise across the ABS senior executive. <p>Mentoring, coaching and training programs aimed at delivering transformation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analytical skills training program • mentoring framework implemented • Self-Learning Guide • coaching for high performance • new tailored induction program • 360-degree feedback provided to all SES. <p></p> <p>Supporting and increasing diversity in the workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Diversity Network established and increased number of women in our senior executive. 50% women in SES positions • ABS Pride Network established • Disability in the Workplace Manager's Guide launched • Leveraging Aspergers Network established • increased number of SES Diversity Champions. <p>Improvements in WHS case management and injury prevention – reducing our Comcare premium.</p> <p>Online training tool Capability Plus wins gold at the 2016 Learn X Awards for Best New Technology Implementation.</p> <p>ABS Workforce Strategy developed.</p>	<p>People and Culture Action Plan 2017 & 18 developed and implementation commenced.</p> <p></p> <p>Commenced Cultural Transformation Strategy to broaden the current approach to change, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SES training • staff culture survey and diagnostics to baseline culture • strategic workforce planning. <p>Developed an approach to assessing and managing the people and culture implications of the broader ABS transformation.</p> <p>Working with staff to establish and achieve our agreed target culture – high performing, aligned, engaged, innovative and accountable.</p> <p></p> <p>New Culture and Capability Branch established to drive and support cultural change.</p>	<p>Significant progress achieved on our \$257 million investment in improving ABS statistical business infrastructure and processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three of our seven biggest Statistical Business Transformation Program procurements for foundational infrastructure finalised • new tools piloted including Common Language Explorer and Common Authoring Tool • NextGen desktop rollout completed across all ABS offices. <p></p> <p>Improvements to ABS website with new homepage design and navigation implemented – to facilitate easier access to ABS information.</p> <p>DataLab – delivering remote access to data and increased ability to handle large datasets with faster processing through new servers.</p> <p>Total registered users: 491</p> <p>ABS Stats Mobile App wins gold in the Government Services category of the DRIVEN X DESIGN 2017 TECH Design Awards.</p> <p>Completed two office fit-outs as part of the Expanded Activity Based Working (ABW) arrangements – seven of ten offices have now moved to ABW.</p> <p></p> <p>Moved ABS Data Centre to the Canberra Data Centre (CDC) – a whole-of-government data facility – without interruption to ABS ICT services.</p>





Acknowledgements

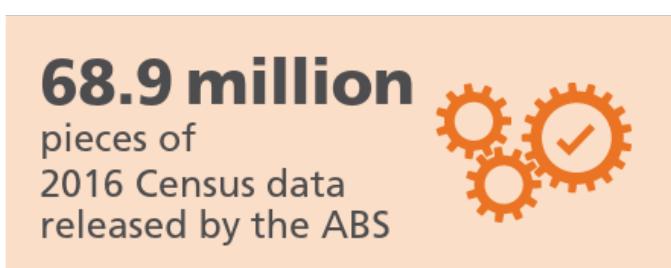
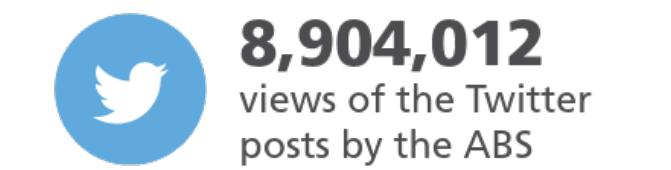
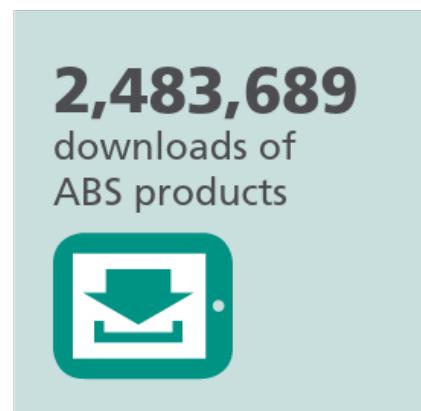
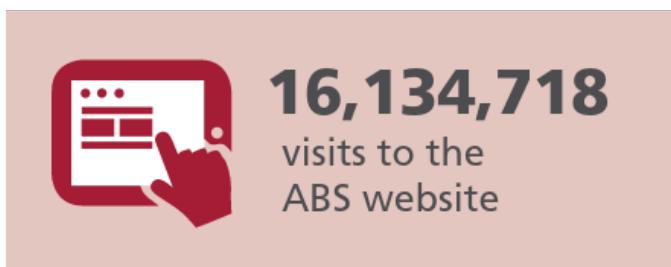
I want to take this opportunity to once again congratulate the skilled staff of the ABS for their hard work and commitment and thank the Australian people for their ongoing support and trust. I also acknowledge the many national organisations that supply us with data critical to our statistical collections. In addition, we rely on the many state and territory agencies that provide the information essential for the compilation of economic, social, population and environmental collections.

The Bureau's ongoing partnerships with other government agencies, both within and outside Australia have contributed significantly to the relevance and quality of our statistical products. It has been a challenging year for the ABS and I would like to acknowledge the support our Minister, the Hon Michael McCormack MP has provided throughout the year.

David W. Kalisch
Australian Statistician

Chapter 2

ABS at a glance



Our purpose

The ABS purpose is to inform Australia's important decisions by partnering and innovating to deliver relevant, trusted, objective data, statistics and insights.

To achieve our purpose, the ABS is focusing on three priorities to meet Australia's contemporary and emerging statistical needs over the coming years:

- providing high quality official statistics
- transforming the ABS for the future
- delivering new statistical solutions to maximise the value of public data.

Our highest priority is to deliver high quality official statistics. To ensure that we can deliver relevant, trusted, objective statistics, we are transforming the ABS and partnering with our stakeholders to innovate, develop and implement new statistical solutions.

What we do

As the central statistical authority for the Australian Government and provider of statistical services to the states and territories, the ABS seeks to deliver the most public value we can from the resources we receive through:

- providing the statistical information that Australia needs
- responding to the changing information priorities of our stakeholders
- enhancing the ways that we interact with our stakeholders
- developing and maintaining community trust, which is fundamental to our ability to collect high quality information
- enabling effective and safe use of our statistics
- coordinating and advising official bodies on statistics, including developing, and ensuring compliance with, statistical standards
- fulfilling our role as an Accredited Integrating Authority
- building our capacity to take advantage of opportunities, such as advances in technology, big data, and use of administrative information for statistical purposes
- ensuring cost-effective operations, including better utilising existing information, collecting information more efficiently, streamlining processes, and reducing the impact on those who provide statistical information.

Our plan

The ABS Corporate Plan, outlining the ABS purpose, strategic priorities, operating environment and performance measures, can be found on the ABS website at www.abs.gov.au.

Our stakeholders

Maintaining the trust and support of governments, business, and the community is critical for the ABS to achieve its purpose. We accomplished this through partnering with our stakeholders to innovate and deliver relevant, trusted, and objective statistics. We also sought to preserve the ongoing trust of our survey respondents and data providers by continuing to maintain the secrecy of the information provided to us, as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, while also ensuring that we met the additional requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988*. We worked with our government and business stakeholders to reduce respondent burden by more effectively using the wealth of existing government and non-government information to more efficiently deliver insights.

Responsible minister

As part of the Treasury portfolio, the ABS maintains a close relationship with the Department of the Treasury and the responsible Minister, the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Minister for Small Business, while acting independently and objectively to provide official statistics and exercise our legislative powers. The Statement of Expectations for the ABS outlines the Australian Government's expectations of us as we carry out our functions¹. During 2016–17, the Hon. Alex Hawke, MP, Federal Member for Mitchell and at the time Assistant Minister to the Treasurer, was also the Minister responsible for the ABS from 1 July to mid-July 2016.



*Hon. Michael McCormack, MP,
Minister for Small Business and
Federal Member for Riverina*



Enabling legislation²

The *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* and the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* set out the primary functions, duties and powers of the ABS.

The *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* establishes the ABS as an independent statutory authority, with Section 6(1) describing the six functions of the ABS as being to:

- constitute the central statistical authority for the Australian Government and provide services for the state and territory governments
- collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics and related information
- ensure coordination of the operations of official bodies in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and related information
- develop standards for statistics and ensure compliance
- give advice and assistance to official bodies in relation to statistics
- provide liaison between Australia, other countries and international organisations on statistical issues.

The *Census and Statistics Act 1905*:

- empowers the Australian Statistician to collect statistical information on a broad range of demographic, economic, environmental and social topics
- enables the Australian Statistician to direct a person to provide statistical information, in which case they are legally obliged to do so
- requires the ABS to publish the results of these statistical collections
- places a life-long obligation on all ABS officers to maintain the secrecy of information collected under the Act, and provides harsh penalties for those who fail to do so.

¹ See the ABS Statements of Expectations and Intent on the ABS Website <http://abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/Home/ABS+Statements+of+Expectations+and+Intent?opendocument>

² Minor amendments were made to the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* in line with changes to various references of the statute law of the Commonwealth during 2016–17. Minor amendments were also made to the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* to enable the repeal of certain provisions of the *A.C.T. Self Government (Consequential Provisions) Regulations* during 2016–17.

The *Statistics Regulations 1983* and the *Census and Statistics (Census) Regulation 2015* were consolidated to make the *Census and Statistics Regulation 2016*.

The ABS is subject to the requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, which establishes a coherent system of governance and accountability for public resources, with an emphasis on planning, performance and reporting. The ABS is also subject to the *Public Service Act 1999*, the principal Act governing the establishment and operation of, and employment in, the Australian Public Service; and is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013*.

Compliance with legislation

In order to encourage compliance with the 2016 Census, 2,951 Notices of Direction to complete the Census were issued pursuant to the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. As of 30 June 2017, ten matters were referred to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions for consideration due to persons failing to comply with a Notice of Direction.

Organisational structure

The ABS is led by the Australian Statistician – a statutory office established by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

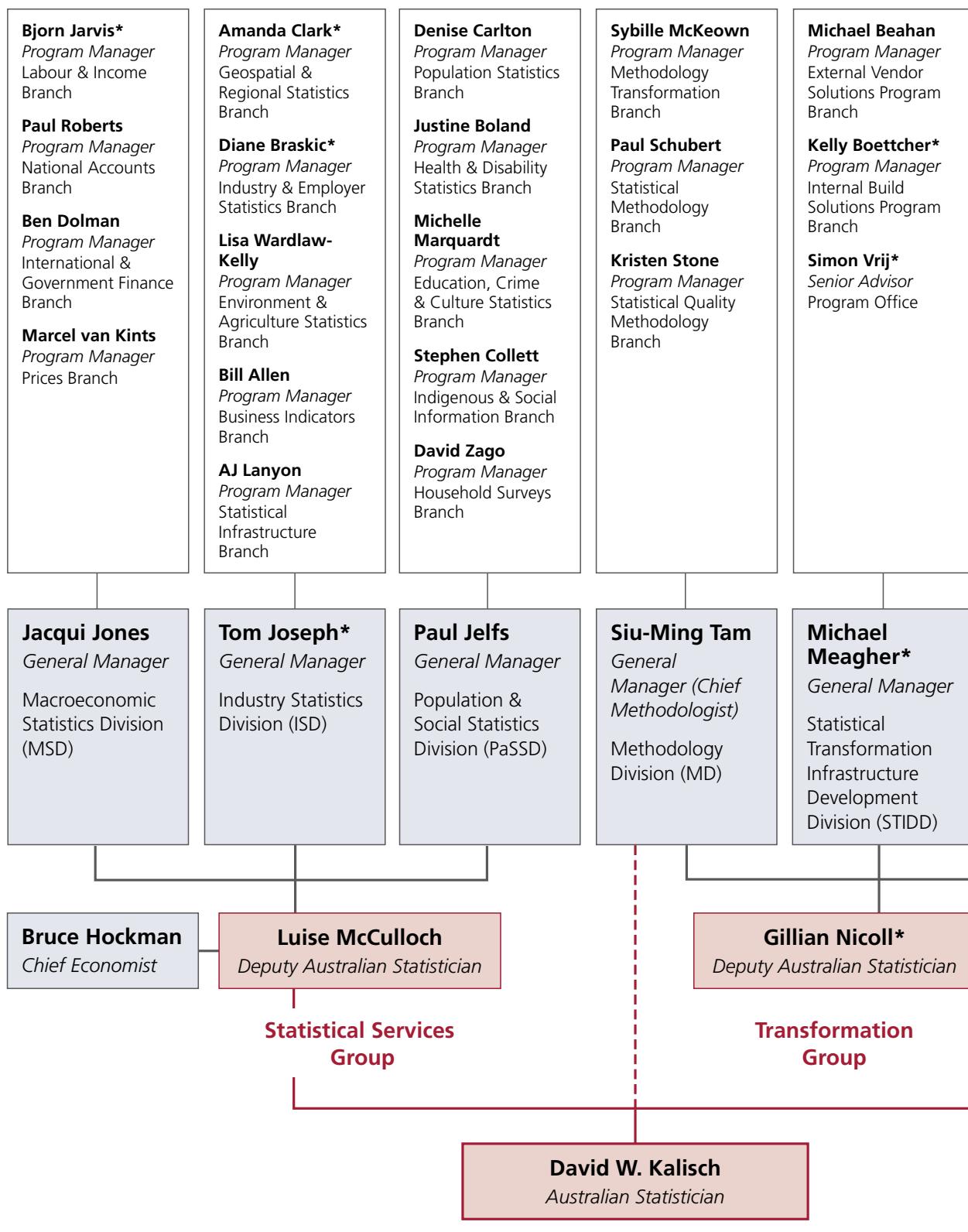
To remain relevant and capitalise on the opportunities of a dynamic information environment, the ABS is fundamentally transforming across all aspects of the organisation. Alongside this transformation agenda, the ABS continues to produce a range of economic, industry, population and social statistics to inform Australia's decision-making. The production of these statistics involves extensive data collection through censuses and surveys as well as from administrative and other transactional data sources. The ABS undertakes extensive analysis and interpretation of the data in order to provide high quality, objective and relevant statistical information that meet user requirements in a variety of formats. The ABS is supported by enabling services, which deliver assistance and advice on statistical collection and compilation methods, data and metadata arrangements, information technology, data acquisition and collection, client management, dissemination, human resources, risk, planning, policy, procurement and other enabling services.

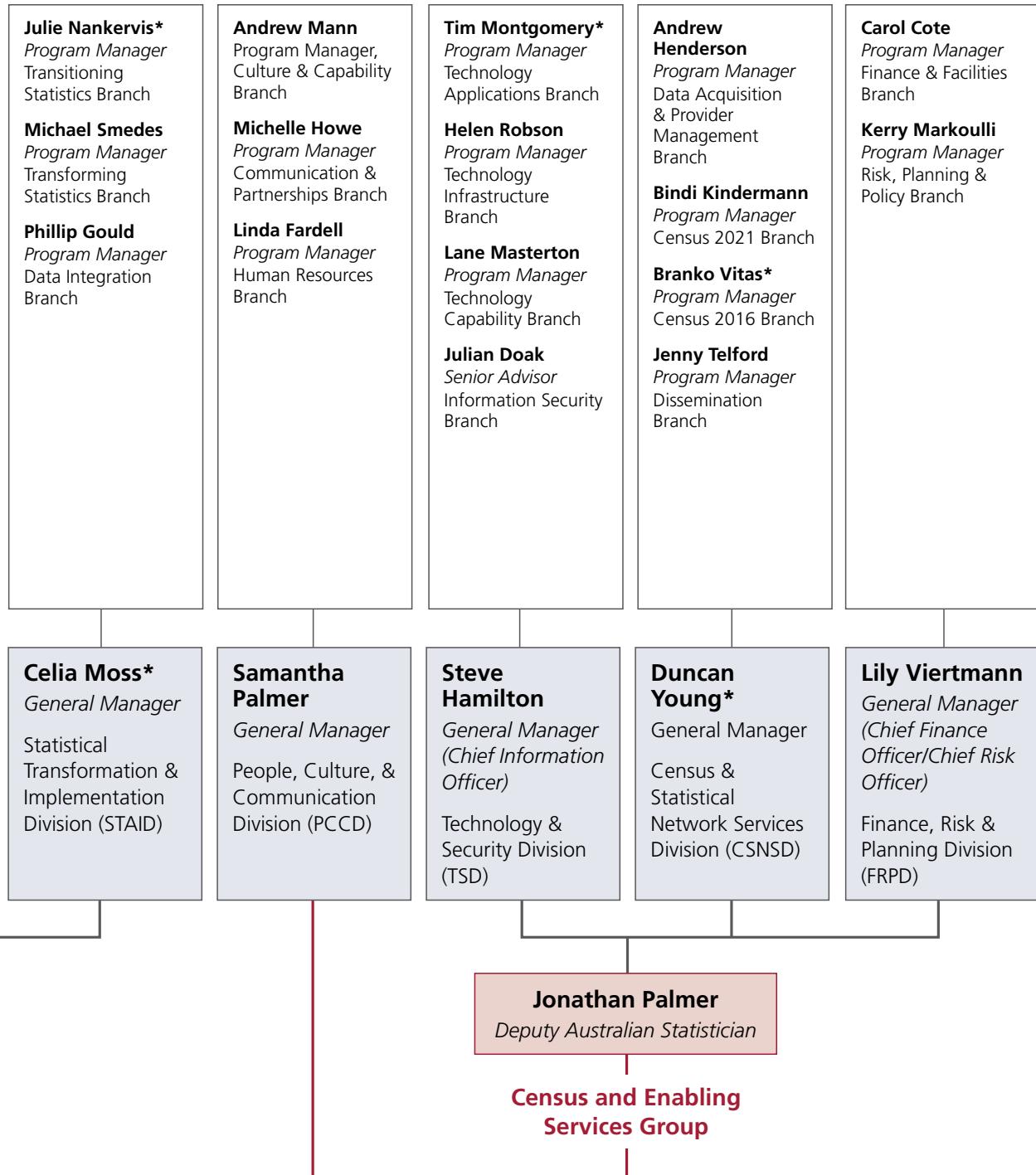
Figure 2.1: Organisation chart

as at 30 June 2017

ABS staff members

ABS field staff, APS and EL staff, contractors





*Individual is acting or contractor

Australian Statistics Advisory Council

The Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) is the ABS's key advisory body and is established under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*. ASAC provides independent advice to the Minister responsible for the ABS and the Australian Statistician on improvement of statistical services, longer-term statistical priorities and other relevant matters. It also reports to the Parliament annually.

The Chairperson of the Council is Professor Gary Banks AO, former Chief Executive and Dean of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG). Members are drawn from a broad cross-section, including the Australian Government, state and territory governments, business and academia. The Council's diversity helps shape the advice it provides on ABS's strategic management and transformation. ASAC also provides valuable input into the directions and priorities of the ABS work program.

As set out in the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, the role of the Council is to advise the Minister and the Statistician in relation to:

- (a) the improvement, extension and coordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia
- (b) annual and longer-term priorities and programs of work that should be adopted in relation to major aspects of the provision of those statistical services
- (c) any other matters relating generally to those statistical services.

ASAC mission

The Council's mission is to contribute to the effective development of Australia's statistical assets, by providing the Minister and the Statistician with independent, relevant and timely advice on national priorities.

A change in leadership for ASAC

The past year has seen a number of significant changes to Council membership.

In February 2017, Mr Geoff Allen AM stepped down as Chairperson after a tenure of ten years. Over this period, Mr Allen provided passionate advocacy for the work undertaken by the ABS and its role as a leader within the statistical system, including implementation of the *Essential Statistical Assets for Australia* initiative and leading Council input into the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Data Availability and Use.

Mr Allen was replaced by Professor Gary Banks AO, former Chief Executive and Dean of ANZSOG. Professor Banks brings valuable experience in both government and the private sector, especially as inaugural Chairman of the Productivity Commission. Under Professor Banks' leadership, the Council's priorities for the coming year include helping the ABS to strengthen its relationships with stakeholders and taking an active role in shaping the Australian statistical system and its priorities.

The Council has also welcomed the appointment of new senior representatives from the governments of New South Wales and Victoria, and reappointment of the representative from the Queensland government. The representation of all states and territories on the Council is critical to achieving whole-of-government support for improvements to the statistical system.

Further information on ASAC including its annual report can be found at
www.asac.gov.au.



Australian Statistics Advisory Council – August 2017

Outcome and program structure

In the Portfolio Budget Statements 2016–17, the ABS has one outcome:

Informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community by leading the collection, analysis and provision of high quality, objective and relevant statistical information.

The ABS's Portfolio Budget Statement program

Within the context of the Portfolio Budget Statements, Program 1.1 (Australian Bureau of Statistics), the ABS produces and disseminates statistics to meet the outcome.

Economic statistics are produced predominantly from data collected through the ABS business survey program as well as administrative data sources. They include an extensive range of statistical outputs relating to the structure and performance of the Australian economy.

Population and social statistics are produced from data collected through the ABS household survey program as well as administrative data. They include statistical information relating to the Australian population, including census and demographic statistics, as well as information relating to the social and economic wellbeing of the population.

Program 1.1 (Australian Bureau of Statistics) contributes to the outcome through delivery of high quality statistical information to inform Australia's most important issues and through engaging with users within government, business and the community to ensure they have the confidence in the statistical resources available to enable them to make informed decisions.

Program 1.1 deliverables

In 2016–17, the ABS:

- provided a range of quality and timely statistical information, including integrated data and microdata, across key economic, population and social subject matter areas that meet the needs of governments, business and the community
- reduced the burden on respondents by increasing the use of non-survey-based data sources and expanding the use of electronic forms
- improved the relevance, reliability and accuracy of ABS statistical outputs by actively engaging with stakeholders to understand their needs
- partnered with Australian governments and other key stakeholders to ensure development and coherence of the national statistical system
- partnered with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to undertake statistical capability development to benefit partners in Asia and the Pacific region
- provided advice and guidance on the development and implementation of statistical standards and frameworks internationally to assist stakeholders and producers of statistics
- continued to transform the ABS business systems and processes to improve the efficiency and accessibility and expand the range of statistical solutions to ensure the long term sustainability of the ABS.

Chapter 3

Special articles



SPECIAL ARTICLE

The 2016 Census of Population and Housing

The Census of Population and Housing (the Census) is the single most current and valuable data set of our nation, and complements the other 500 statistical releases the ABS produces each and every year.

Australia's 17th national Census in 2016 was achieved thanks to the millions of Australians whose participation informs our understanding of our local communities and regions, our states and territories, and our nation, and how we are changing over time.

The delivery of a census is a collaborative effort made possible through the hard work of dedicated ABS staff, our suppliers and the support of many agencies and community groups.

Information from the Census provides invaluable insights into the make-up of our population. It is used to estimate Australia's population, and inform critical decisions for our future, including where to build new infrastructure such as schools, roads, hospitals, childcare centres and aged care facilities.

The 2016 Census data will inform important decisions by governments, businesses, communities and households over the coming years, until the next Census is undertaken in 2021.

2016 Census Operations

The 2016 Census has once again shown the value that the Australian community places in the Census. Thanks to the overwhelming participation of Australians in last year's Census, and the perseverance and dedication of the ABS, the 2016 Census counted almost 10 million dwellings, and 23.4 million people, across Australia. For the first time, in 2016 Norfolk Island was included in the Australian Census and the residents there embraced the opportunity to participate in the national count.

The Census was completed by 95% of Australia's occupied households with a net person undercount of 1% meaning the quality is comparable to both the 2011 and 2006 Australian Censuses, and censuses in other countries, such as New Zealand, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

The 2016 Census marked a new way of Census taking in Australia, with the ABS deploying a digital-first approach for many facets of the Census from recruiting and training the Census workforce, encouraging greater use of the online form, and processing the data.

Digital-first

The 2016 Census achieved an online completion rate of 63%. The digital-first Census made it faster and easier to process data, and produced a higher-quality data set. It also saved taxpayers over \$100 million.

The higher online participation rate for some of Australia's multicultural communities was also a significant achievement. 90% of people born in China and 85% of people born in India completed the Census online.

With nearly two-thirds of us choosing the online form in the 2016 Census, this approach will be continued for future censuses, consistent with public expectations of interacting with government through digital means.

National Address Register

A central element of the new approach to the 2016 Census was the development of a national Address Register. The Address Register is Australia's most accurate and comprehensive national listing of addresses and the residential dwellings at each address. The Address Register enabled the use of mail outs and flexible household level approaches and monitoring.

Online, connected workforce

The 2016 Census employed a large casual workforce of 38,000 staff through a digital-first approach. The staff were recruited, trained and managed through online processes, and used a mobile application on their own devices to optimise workflow and data collection in real time.

Tasks were dynamically allocated to field staff, ensuring an even spread of work nationally. Progress was monitored at a household level and an adaptive approach used to ensure a good response across local areas and thus higher quality Census data.

Safest Census

The work of Census field staff includes inherent risks. There are many challenges associated with having a large temporary workforce, employed for a short period, geographically dispersed across the country, including in remote areas with difficult access and communications. The ABS introduced a number of measures to protect personal safety such as increasing work health and safety training and communications and providing real time connections through technology, such as access to counselling services.

Through these innovations, the 2016 Census achieved greater safety awareness, safer practices and consequently fewer injuries and Comcare cases with a reduction of over 80% in accepted workers' compensation claims compared to the previous Census.

Reaching all Australians

The 2016 Census implemented inclusive strategies to increase the coverage of specific populations, enabling broad and easy participation in the Census. Different strategies were used to include people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people from remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The online form was designed to enable people with disability to access and complete the form, including use of screen readers and other assistive technologies. The accessibility of the online form and Census website content was verified and certified independently.

The Census Post-Enumeration Survey

The Census Post-Enumeration Survey (PES) is conducted after every Census to measure Census quality and produce high quality population estimates. For the 2016 Census PES, the ABS significantly increased the sample size to more than 40,000 households. The results of the 2016 Census PES showed a Census net undercount rate of 1% (equivalent to 226,407 persons). This result, along with other data quality checks and investigations, confirmed the quality of 2016 Census data.

Data quality independently assured

The Australian Statistician established an Independent Assurance Panel (IAP), consisting of eminent Australian and international experts to provide extra assurance and transparency of Census data quality. The IAP concluded that the quality of 2016 Census data is comparable to the previous high quality Australian Censuses in 2011 and 2006, and Census data can be used with confidence. The 2016 Census IAP report is available on the ABS website.

Online security

On Census night, the ABS took decisive action to close the online form to protect the privacy of the Australian public following a series of outages due to distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks. The Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) reported that the DDoS attacks did not result in any unauthorised access to, or extraction of, any personal information.

The ABS acknowledges the issues experienced on Census night caused a great deal of frustration to the Australian public, and apologises for the inconvenience caused. Since the events of Census night, the ABS has made a number of improvements including engaging an independent security consultant to provide advice on storing and collecting Census data, implementing new practices for the handling of personal information including independently conducted Privacy Impact Assessments, and developing more robust frameworks and guidelines for outsourced ICT suppliers.

Census 2016 Results

Early release – 11 April 2017

For the first time, an early preview of the 2016 Census results was released on 11 April 2017, providing insights into what makes the ‘typical’ Australian at the national and state and territory level, and showing what has changed over time.

Who was the ‘typical’ Australian in 2016?

2016 Census results show that the ‘typical’ Australian is a 38 year old female. A decade ago, the ‘typical’ Australian would have been a year younger.

Australia’s population has changed a lot over the past 105 years. In 1911, when the first Census was taken, the ‘typical’ Australian was a 24 year old male, but women have outnumbered men since 1979.

The ‘typical’ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person is also female, but is younger at 23 years old.

Looking across the country, the ‘typical’ Australian male or female was born in Australia, has English ancestry and parents also born in Australia. However, there are plenty of local differences. For example, a ‘typical’ person from New South Wales, Victoria or Western Australia has at least one parent who was born overseas.

The ‘typical’ Australian is also married with two children, completed Year 12 and lives in a three bedroom house with two motor vehicles.

All ‘typical’ Australia profiles, including for states and territories are available from the ABS website.

First comprehensive release – 27 June 2017

The first comprehensive Census data was released on 27 June 2017 including national, state and territory and capital city data for selected key person, family and dwelling characteristics including age, sex, religion, language and income.

The first release demonstrated as a nation, there are more of us, we're living longer, becoming more urbanised, more diverse, less religious, living closer together, earning more and forming the same type of family unit.

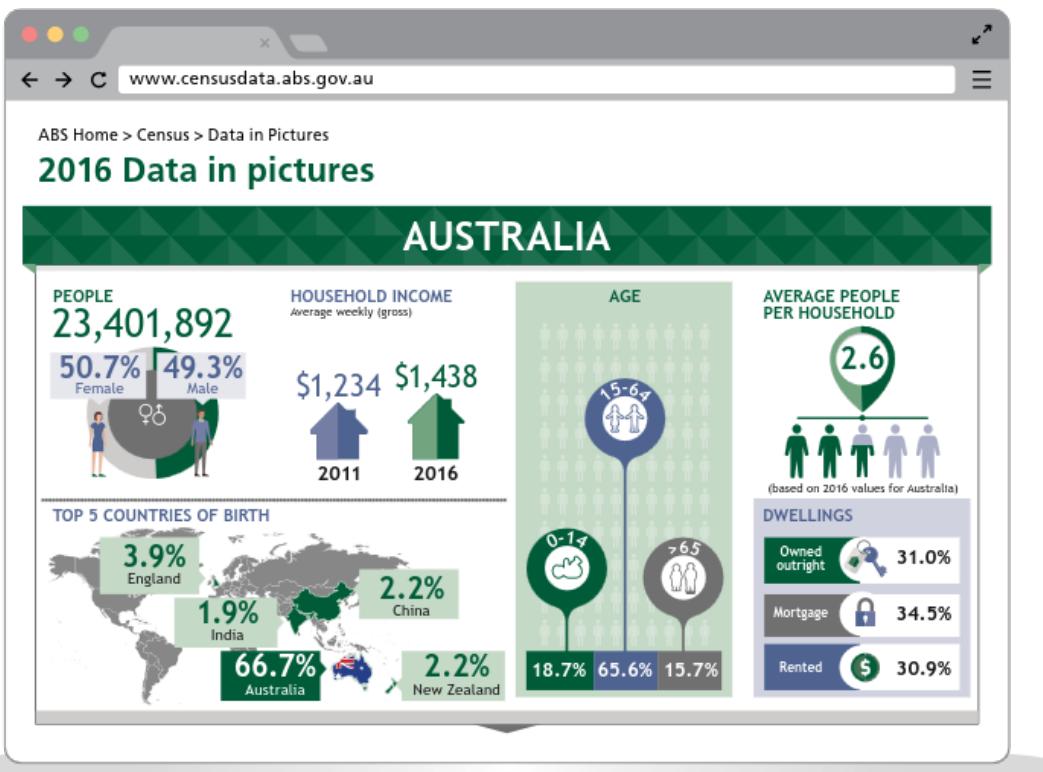
The 2016 Census counted 23.4 million people living in Australia, an increase of 8.8% since the 2011 Census. Australia's population has more than doubled in the 50 years since the 1966 Census, which counted 11.6 million people.

Australia is growing, particularly in our capital cities, where more than two-thirds of Australians live. Sydney is still the largest city in Australia; however Melbourne is continuing to catch up.

2016 marked the 50th anniversary of the referendum that led to the full inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Census. The proportion of the population reporting as having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin increased to 2.8% in 2016 – an increase of more than 18% in the last five years.

The median age of all Australians increased to 38 years in 2016, after remaining at 37 years since the 2006 Census, reflecting Australia's ageing population. This is also highlighted by the increase in the proportion of the population aged 65 years and over, from 14% in 2011 to 16% in 2016.

Australia has a rich mix of cultural backgrounds and heritage, with the number of people living in Australia who were born overseas continuing to increase. The number of people born overseas increased by almost one million people between the 2011 and 2016 Censuses, rising from 25% of the population in 2011 to 26% in 2016.



As at 30 June 2017, the ABS had released 68.9 million pieces of data and 2.8 million tables of data through a range of free and easy to use Census data products, including QuickStats, Community Profiles, Analytical Articles, TableBuilder, DataPacks and infographics. To produce these data products, Census staff processed 8.5 million household forms and 750,000 personal forms and undertook 23 million clerical operations and over 5 billion data transactions.

Future Census releases

October 2017

Detailed Census data on employment, qualifications and population mobility, including journey to work and internal migration will be released in October 2017.

February 2018

A third data point will be added to the Australian Census Longitudinal Dataset (ACLD), bringing together 5% samples from the 2006, 2011 and 2016 Censuses. This dataset is a statistical research tool for exploring how Australian society is changing over time. The updated ACLD is expected to be released in February 2018.

Homelessness Estimates, Census Microdata and Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) will also be progressively released throughout 2018.

Lessons learned

The ABS is building on our learnings from the 2016 Census experience (including findings from the MacGibbon Review, the Senate Inquiry and the IAP) to deliver a 2021 Census which is an easy experience for the general public, provides security of information and produces high data quality.





SPECIAL ARTICLE

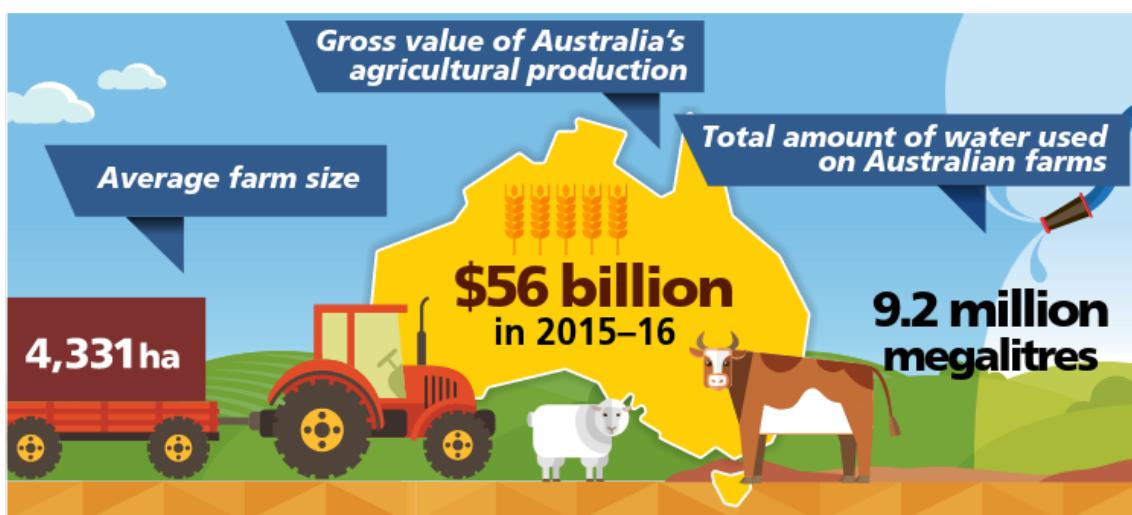
2015–16 Agricultural Census

During July 2016, the ABS commenced its largest business collection, the 2015–16 Agricultural Census. Around 104,000 businesses, ranging from beef cattle production to broadacre farming and vineyards, took part in the Census. Their continuing strong support is the foundation of the Agricultural Census and the ABS greatly appreciates the farmers' time and effort in providing information.

The 2015–16 Agricultural Census reported on the 371 million hectares of agricultural land operated by Australian farming businesses, a 1 per cent increase compared to 2014–15, with results suggesting that climatic conditions were a strong influence on production and stocking rates through the year. While the total gross value of agricultural production reached a record high of \$56 billion in 2015–16, warm dry conditions in southern Australia saw decreased production reported for Wheat, Australia's most valuable crop. This is in contrast to more favourable conditions in northern Australia which allowed beef cattle farming businesses to commence restocking activities earlier than expected and supported a 14 per cent increase in the value of beef cattle production.

Nearly 35,000 businesses also completed the Land Management Practices Survey which is wholly user funded by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. Together the Agricultural Census and Land Management Practices Survey described how Australian farming businesses utilised agricultural land and managed their natural resources. The 2015–16 Land Management Practices Survey showed that Australian farming businesses applied soil enhancer and fertiliser to larger areas of land than in 2014–15, up 6 and 10 per cent respectively, while the Agricultural census showed that Australian farming businesses also irrigated larger areas of land, up 4 per cent, but with 3 per cent less water.

This year, the Agricultural Census went through a series of reforms based on government, industry and community consultation. As a result, the Census content was refocused to better address the needs of key users. These changes also included raising the threshold used to identify businesses in scope of the collection, the Estimated Value of Agricultural Operations (EVAO), from \$5,000 per annum, to \$40,000 and above. This brought the collection more in line with other statistical collections and significantly reduced the survey burden on small farming operations. With data released in four separate publications, the Agricultural Census provides an invaluable snapshot of the agricultural sector. It is one of the major sources of detail about Australian agriculture, and informs policy decisions in a range of different areas.





SECTION TWO

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE



Chapter 4

Annual performance statement



Introductory Statement

As the Accountable Authority of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), I present the 2016–17 annual performance statement of the ABS, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). In my opinion, based on advice from ABS management and the Audit Committee, this performance statement accurately reflects the performance of the ABS against the performance criteria included in its Portfolio Budget Statement³ and Corporate Plan, and complies with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act.

Signed

David W. Kalisch
Australian Statistician

ABS Purpose

The ABS Purpose⁴ is to provide trusted official statistics on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters of importance to Australia.

Results

Results against the criteria from the *ABS Corporate Plan 2016–17 to 2019–20* and the ABS Portfolio Budget Statement (PBS) are described below. All results related to one programme in the ABS PBS: 1.1 *Australian Bureau of Statistics*.

³ ABS Portfolio Budget Statement is contained in *Budget 2016–17 – Portfolio Budget Statements 2016–17 – Budget Related Paper No. 1.16 – Treasury Portfolio*.

⁴ The ABS purpose was slightly modified in August 2016 and is listed under Performance Monitoring and Reporting (page 24) in the ABS Corporate Plan 2016–17 (cat. no. 1005.0), which is available on the ABS website.

Performance Criterion 1	Criterion Source
ABS statistical solutions will continue to inform decision makers, researchers and discussion by governments, business and the community.	ABS Corporate Plan & Portfolio Budget Statement Program 1.1, 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements, p.56.
The ABS produces the statistics required by users and the statistics will be of sufficient quality to be fit-for-purpose for users. The ABS will engage with partners through appropriate consultation forums to understand user requirements that inform strategic directions and the ABS work program.	
The ABS will better manage risks to key statistics to maintain appropriate quality.	

Target 1.1: ABS continues to produce key economic and population statistics with appropriate coverage, frequency and timeliness as assessed by the International Monetary Fund against the Special Data Dissemination Standard; except where the ABS has made an explicit decision not to do so, following consultation with stakeholders, based on Australian needs and circumstances.

Why this target is important: To ensure comparability between countries, the standards, frameworks, classifications and methodologies governing official statistics are agreed internationally. The ABS publishes the concepts, sources and methods it uses for all key macroeconomic and demographic statistics. The ABS releases publications that include information on the applications of internationally agreed practices in ABS statistics.

Most years, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) assesses Australia's observance of its Special Data Dissemination Standards. These standards provide an accepted benchmark for the main economic and population indicators for subscribing countries.

Results: Target met.

The most recent IMF Country Report on Australia was published in February 2017 and it noted that:

"Data provision is adequate for surveillance⁵. Australia has subscribed to the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) since April 1996, and its metadata are posted on the Fund's Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB)." (IMF Country Report No. 17/42)

Target 1.2: At least 96% of the media articles are not critical of the ABS or ABS statistics.

Why this target is important: Media reporting of concerns about the quality of ABS statistics or about the reputation of the ABS as a trusted organisation may indicate distrust in ABS official statistics, diminish reliance on them for decision making, and reduce voluntary participation in ABS surveys.

Results: Target not met.

81% of print articles referred to the ABS without concerns about ABS statistical quality or general criticism of ABS as an agency⁶. The result was less than the target mainly due to negative coverage in 2016 surrounding the 2016 Census of Population and Housing (Census) operations.

⁵ The IMF monitors developments in its member countries, as well as at regional and global levels, to ascertain potential sources of economic and financial instability. This process is known as surveillance.

⁶ Based on assessment of 3033 articles in a number of key media outlets citing ABS statistics (identified through a contracted media monitoring service).

Target 1.3: The following consultation fora meetings will be held:

- three of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council;
- at least four of the State Government Statistical Priorities Forum;
- two of the Australian Government Statistical Forum;
- at least two Economic Statistics Advisory Group meetings; and
- two Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group meetings.

Why this target is important: It is important to engage with key user groups to understand their information needs and be sensitive and responsive to stakeholder needs and preferences. Stakeholders want to partner with the ABS and be connected with opportunities across the statistical system.

Results: Target met.

The ABS held the majority of the planned strategic engagement fora meetings during 2016–17, including: two of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council; three of the State Government Statistical Priority Forum (now known as the State Statistical Forum); three of the Australian Government Statistical Forum; two of the Economic Statistics Advisory Group; and two of the Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group.

The planned June 2017 Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)⁷ meeting was moved to August 2017 due to member availability, thereby reducing the number of meetings to two instead of the forecast three in 2016–17. The State Statistical Forum (formerly known as the State Government Statistical Priorities Forum) held three meetings in 2016–17, which was the expected number since the original target was set incorrectly. The Australian Government Statistical Forum held one more meeting than was expected, at the request of members.

Target 1.4: Risk Management Plans are developed and approved for key economic and industry statistics.

Why this target is important: This target enables effective management of statistical risk across the ABS in a time of significant change.

Results: Target met.

The Labour Force, the National Accounts, Consumer Price Index and Estimated Resident Population, as well as key inputs to these statistics, have implemented risk management plans that have been quality reviewed by the ABS Statistical Quality Methodology Branch.

⁷ *The Australian Bureau of Statistics Act (1975)* stipulates that the Australian Statistics Advisory Council must meet at least once in every calendar year (section 22(1)). The Council will meet three times in the 2017 calendar year.

Performance Criterion 2	Criterion Source
The ABS will partner and collaborate with stakeholders to develop new statistical solutions that inform decisions on important matters. ABS stakeholders will provide feedback on the effectiveness of these collaborations, their satisfaction with the ABS responsiveness in meeting their needs, and their confidence in ABS statistics.	ABS Corporate Plan & Portfolio Budget Statement Program 1.1, 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements, p.57.

Target 2.1: Partners report increased levels of satisfaction with ABS responsiveness in meeting their needs in the biennial Stakeholder Relationship Health Assessment compared to when the APSC Capability Review of the ABS was undertaken.

Why this is important: It is important to engage with key user groups to understand their information needs and be sensitive and responsive to stakeholder needs and preferences. Stakeholders want to partner with the ABS and be connected with opportunities across the statistical system.

Results: Not due to report until 2017–18.

The External Stakeholder Relationship Health Assessment is undertaken every two years. It was last completed in 2015–16 and is due to be repeated in 2017–18.

Target 2.2: Case studies are produced demonstrating how the ABS collaborates with partners to develop statistical solutions that have or will significantly inform important decision making by government.

Why this is important: Informing important decision making by government is fundamental to achieving the outcome of the ABS. Case studies are one way for the ABS to demonstrate it is performing and achieving its outcome.

Results: Target met.

The case studies at the end of this chapter demonstrate how the ABS collaborates with partners:

- Case Study 1: Using BLADE to provide new insights into the benefits of business research and development – a collaboration with the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and Swinburne University of Technology
- Case Study 2: The Multi-Agency Data Integration Project (MADIP)
- Case Study 3: Experimental Land Accounts – a collaboration with Geoscience Australia.

Target 2.3: A baseline is established on the use of ABS data integration products.

Why this is important: Producing microdata and integrating survey and administrative datasets significantly enhances the potential of public sector data to drive innovation, efficiency, productivity and economic growth. Data access systems (such as virtual data laboratories) continue to be enhanced to allow trusted users to access microdata while protecting the identities of individuals and organisations.

Results: Target met.

In response to a changing environment, the ABS has been seeking to widen the availability of its microdata. This has introduced a whole new way of working with microdata, which has met user needs and resulted in a high demand for the new services that are being trialled. The baseline was established and achieved in 2015–16 due to the high take-up of the new ABS DataLab. In 2016–17 the number of registered integrated data users increased from 68 to 209, an increase of 307%. Trials of the ABS DataLab continue, allowing the ABS to refine the provision of secure access to selected researchers.

Performance Criterion 3	Criterion Source
The ABS will reduce the burden placed on providers. Provider take-up of electronic reporting will be enhanced through a Census electronic form usable on many mobile devices.	ABS Corporate Plan & Portfolio Budget Statement Program 1.1, 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements, p.57.

Target 3.1: The ABS delivers annualised reductions in red tape of at least \$200,000.

Why this is important: The principal objective of the ABS in respect of providers is to impose the lowest load possible while meeting its obligations to provide Government and the community with a high quality official statistical service.

Results: Target not met for 2016–17 financial year.

The ABS has reported on regulatory burden since January 2014 with targets established in 2016–17. While the target was not met for 2016–17, the table below shows that since reporting commenced the ABS has reduced regulatory burden by an average of \$2,306,435 each year.

In consultation with key stakeholders, and in line with the ABS Forward Work Program, decisions were made to increase content in the Survey of International Investment to better service government information needs. This led to an overall increase in regulatory burden in 2016–17 of \$285,877.

Financial year	Change in burden
2013–14	-\$458,000
2014–15	-\$6,228,000
2015–16	-\$1,672,400
2016–17	\$285,877
Net decrease in burden over the reporting years	-\$8,072,523

Target 3.2: Estimated total provider burden on businesses remains steady at approximately 400,000 hours.

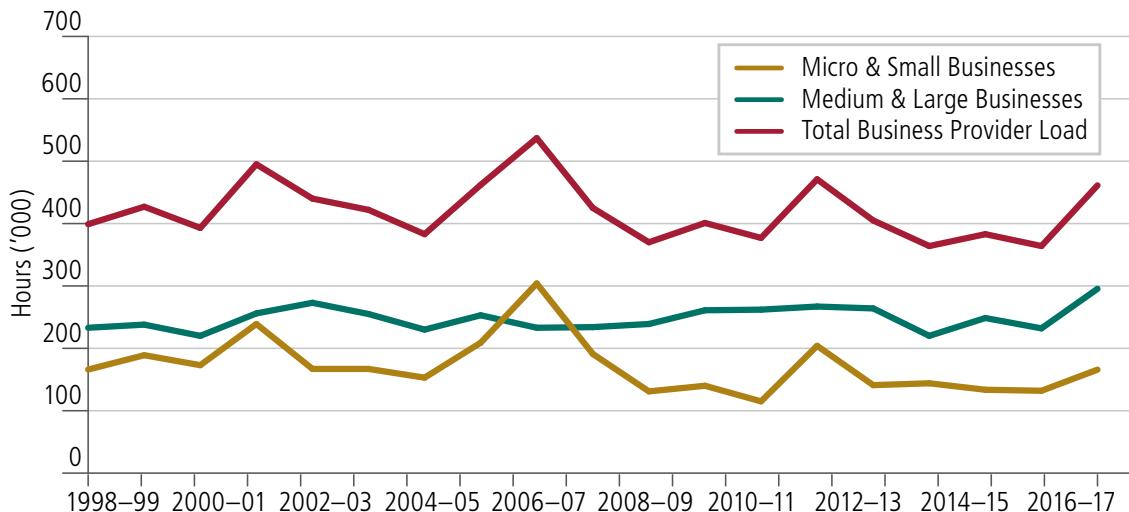
Why this is important: The principal objective of the ABS in respect of providers is to impose the lowest load burden possible while meeting its obligations to provide Government and the community with a high quality official statistical service.

Results: Target not met.

461,262 hours^{8,9}

⁸ As indicated by the historical data in Figure 4.1, this result is largely due to 2016–17 being an Agricultural Census year. This collection is conducted once every five years. For the current reporting year (2016–17), the Agricultural Census resulted in approximately 103,000 hours of provider load.

⁹ Year on year comparisons should be treated with caution due to the cyclical nature of significant collections, such as the Agricultural Census, which is conducted every five years.

Figure 4.1: Total business provider load

Source: ABS Annual report, various years; ABS Collection Management System (CMS).

Note: Spikes in the data are observed in the following five yearly intervals, which correspond with the Agricultural Census: 2001–02; 2006–07; 2011–12; and 2016–17.

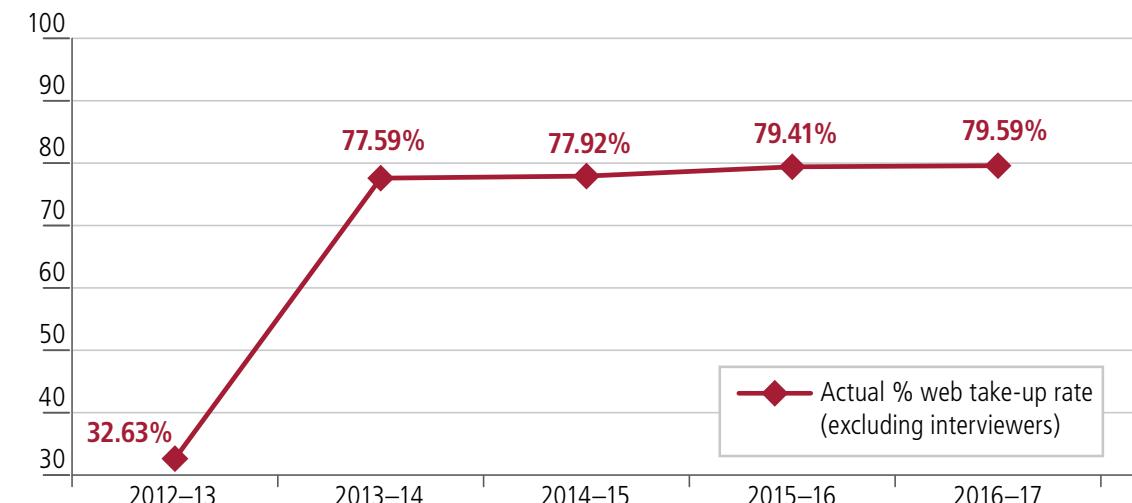
Target 3.3: Business take-up of electronic forms exceeds 90%.

Why this is important: The ongoing cooperation of providers is critical for the ABS to provide the high quality statistical information needed to foster informed debate and drive evidence based policy making. Contemporary data collection methods, such as the use of electronic forms, increase efficiency for providers, allowing for an enhanced provider experience and improved data quality outcomes.

Results: Target mostly met.

80% (rounded) business electronic form take-up.¹⁰

Time series of total business take-up of electronic forms by reporting period since 2012–2013.

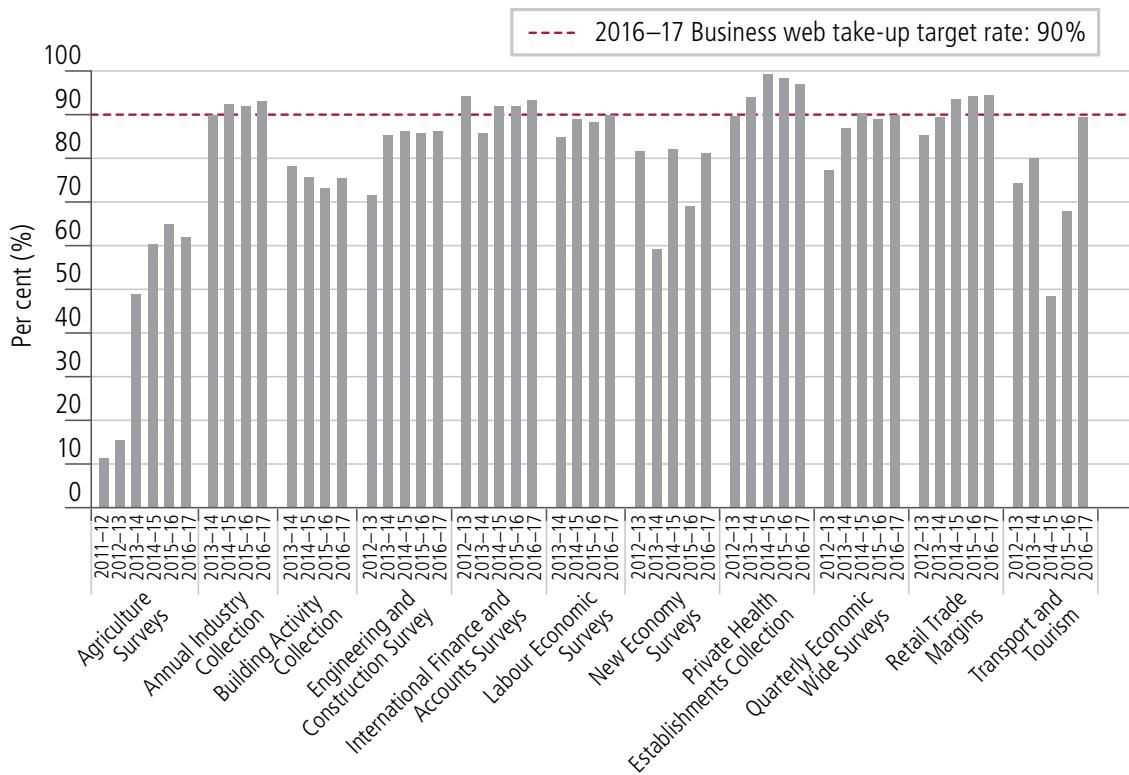
Figure 4.2: ABS Business Survey self-responding web take-up rates

Source: Aggregated data extracted from Provider Information Management System (PIMS), which is the Management Information system used for tracking response rates for business surveys.

Note: In 2012–13, the ABS moved to using a web form for most business surveys. The results for 2012–13 reflect only one quarter of web form take-up rates, as this transition occurred for the last quarter of 2012–13 reporting period.

¹⁰ The appetite for web self-response varies across business survey providers. Some industries, particularly those in scope for agricultural collections, have a lower propensity to complete surveys online.

Figure 4.3 Breakdown of ABS Business Survey self-responding web take-up rates by business statistical area



Source: Aggregated data extracted from Provider Information Management System (PIMS), which is the Management Information system used for tracking response rates for business surveys.

Target 3.4: More than 65% of the population complete their Census using an electronic form.

Why this is important: ABS testing showed that on average households completed the electronic form faster than the paper form equivalent in a side by side comparison. Also, data reported on the electronic form was of better quality than on the paper form. This is a cost saving for the ABS and allows the Census data to be released more quickly. It also reduces the time burden on the household filling out the form. The ABS notes that following on from the events of Census night the electronic form was unavailable for nearly two days within an eight week collection period and many people experienced frustration and considerable burden in trying to access the form.

Results: Target mostly met.

63.3% of the population¹¹ completed the Census using the electronic form. The result was less than the target, but a significant increase from the 37.9% of respondents that completed the Census online in 2011.

¹¹ The population is defined as all Australian Usual Residents (excluding overseas visitors) who had the opportunity to complete an online household form. The population used excludes people that were counted in the Census through Interviewer Household Forms, Special Short Forms and in non-private dwellings, as they may not have had the opportunity to participate online. The population used accounts for 95.7% of the total responding population and 96.8% of the responding Usual Resident population.

Performance Criterion 4	Criterion Source
The ABS will collaborate with partners to improve statistical infrastructure, capabilities, people and culture. The ABS Statistical Business Transformation Program is on track to develop innovative new infrastructure and capabilities. The ABS will progress the People and Culture Action Plan including an initiative to develop the future-ready professional, analytical and conceptual skills of selected staff.	ABS Corporate Plan & Portfolio Budget Statement Program 1.1, 2016–17 Portfolio Budget Statements, p.57.

Target 4.1: The new enterprise data management environment will be implemented allowing the ABS to manage its data assets more cost-effectively.

Why this is important: The Statistical Business Transformation Program is two years into its five year program. The \$257m Government investment to modernise ABS infrastructure and business will reduce risks to statistical outputs; reduce costs; and achieve faster turnaround in dissemination of statistics.

Results: Target on track.

During 2016–17 the Enterprise Data Management Environment was delivered into a production environment. It is an integrated environment for storing and managing all types of statistical data. Statistical programs will incrementally adopt the new system over the next few years.

Target 4.2: Case studies are produced demonstrating the benefits of new and enhanced infrastructure and capabilities.

Why this is important: New and enhanced infrastructure and capabilities are essential tools the ABS needs to create new statistics that inform important decision making. Case studies are one way for the ABS to demonstrate that the new infrastructure and capabilities are making a difference.

Results: Target met.

The case studies at the end of this chapter demonstrate the benefits of new and enhanced infrastructure and capabilities:

- Case Study 4: Making a difference – the ABS DataLab
- Case Study 5: Working with Data61 to improve the NationalMap
- Case Study 6: The Freight Performance Measurement Project – a collaboration with the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics.

Target 4.3: All actions from the ABS People and Culture Action Plan for 2016 & 2017¹² are completed including identifying and starting to address future capability requirements through operational group workforce plans.

Why this is important: The ABS People and Culture Action Plans detail the key actions required to deliver on the ABS Workforce Strategy 2015–19, which sets the strategic direction for the people and culture elements of transformation.

Results: Target not met.

¹² This target refers to actions from the ABS 2015 & 2016 *People and Culture Action Plan* and the ABS 2017 & 2018 *People and Culture Action Plan* as there was no People and Culture Action Plan for the 2016–17 financial year.

Due to the need to divert resources to support ABS Transformation and 2016 Census operations, not all actions from the ABS People and Culture Action Plans for 2016 & 2017 were completed. Of the 31 identified actions in the *2015 & 2016 People and Culture Action Plan*, nine were completed (29%) by November 2016. The remaining actions that were in progress at the time were updated and reprioritised as part of the *2017 & 2018 People and Culture Action Plan*. Of these 36 new actions, three have already been completed (8%), with the remainder in progress. The ABS has committed greater resources to progress the identified actions in 2017–18 and the new program of Strategic Workforce Planning provides a focus for the achievement of the ABS's ambitions in relation to people and culture.

Target 4.4: A training course to build future-ready professional, analytical and conceptual skills is developed and piloted.

Why this is important: Building the capacity and capability of ABS staff is critical to helping realise the benefits of transformation. The Statistical Business Transformation Program will provide new systems meaning changes to the type of work staff do and the thinking styles staff must deploy. Upskilling and future proofing our staff in these new systems and the core capabilities required of them will support the continued production of high quality statistics.

Results: Target met.

During 2016–17 the ABS developed a training package (the Analytical Thinking Foundational Pathway), which contained a series of modules to build staff analytical and conceptual capacity. It was launched as a pilot program on 31 October 2016 and then revised, based on feedback, and rolled out to all staff on 31 March 2017.

2016–17 Analysis of performance against purpose

The ABS continues to fulfil its purpose of providing trusted official statistics on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters of importance to Australia (Target 2.2). Fulfilling the purpose of the ABS means that governments, businesses and the community are better informed to discuss, research and make decisions, which enhances the wellbeing of all Australians.

The outage of the online form on Census night in August 2016 resulted in an increase in negative media sentiment. This is reflected in the below-target results for Target 1.2. Rebuilding public and stakeholder confidence and trust in the ABS, and applying the lessons learned in 2016 to planning for the 2021 Census, are major focus areas for the ABS. Strengthening partnerships is also a high priority for the ABS, and throughout 2016–17, the ABS engaged with stakeholders (Target 1.3) to understand their requirements. The next assessment of stakeholder satisfaction with the ABS is due in 2017–18.

A key priority of the ABS has been to continue to deliver high quality, timely statistics on important matters. The frequency, timeliness, coverage and relevance of key macroeconomic and population statistics has been maintained (Target 1.1). The management of statistical risk has improved: key ABS statistical collections now have Risk Management Plans (Target 1.4). New statistical releases created through data integration continue to increase in use (Target 2.3).

The ABS continues its efforts to reduce red tape and burden for providers (Target 3.1 and Target 3.2). Fewer business survey providers than expected reported using the electronic form in 2016–17. This is mainly due to the running of the five yearly Agricultural Census, as the agricultural sector has a lower propensity to complete surveys online (Target 3.3).



The ABS operates in a dynamic environment and is being challenged to deliver the best statistical program possible, given the resourcing allocated. The ABS is committed to major changes to better meet the requirements of stakeholders and is transforming across six dimensions of environment, strategy, governance, people, culture and infrastructure. The ABS is implementing new statistical infrastructure which is delivering benefits to users (Target 4.1 and 4.2). ABS people and culture have been enhanced through training courses developed and rolled out to staff (Target 4.3 and Target 4.4), as well as other initiatives.

Relevant and Complete

These performance measures revolve around ABS statistical solutions informing decision makers, researchers and discussion by governments, business and the community, which is relevant to its purpose. This performance information when read as a whole shows how the ABS purpose is being achieved.

Reliable

Overall, information sources for each measure are fit-for-purpose. Methodologies and processes have been documented. For some measures methodologies need to be strengthened or targets better defined to ensure the results are verifiable. The ABS has a rolling internal audit program which includes examining measures in the performance statement. In 2016–17, three performance measures were audited and the ABS has been improving its approach based on feedback gained from these audits.

Case Study 1: Using BLADE to provide new insights into the benefits of business research and development – a collaboration with the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science and Swinburne University of Technology

Australian businesses spent nearly \$19 billion on research and development activities in 2013–14. The flow on impact of this investment to third parties, not undertaking research and development, is of considerable interest to policy agencies and researchers.

Flow on impact includes productivity improvements resulting from reuse of process innovations, reduced costs of products for consumers through adoption of innovations, and the adaption of research and development by other industries for new uses (for example, technology developed for radar being reused in microwave ovens). The value of this benefit is often referred to as business research and development spillovers.

In 2016, the ABS, the Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS) and Swinburne University of Technology undertook work to assess the value of business research and development spillovers to the economy. This project was undertaken using the ABS's Business Longitudinal Analysis Data Environment (BLADE).

Analysis was undertaken using ABS Business Expenditure on Research and Development survey data, Research and Development Tax Incentive Program data from DIIS, and business income tax return and business activity statement data from the Australian Taxation Office. The data was combined and confidentialised by the ABS and made securely available through the BLADE.

The data in BLADE allowed longitudinal analysis using the population of businesses receiving research and development tax incentives in Australia. Analysis was undertaken by industry sector and business size, and included analysis of the beneficiaries of research and development expenditure. The research produced improved estimates of the value of research and development spillovers in Australia. DIIS plan to release a report based on the research in November 2017.

This has been pioneering work delivering new data models, which can be reused by policy agencies and researchers in future. Antonio Balaguer (DIIS) said "this collaborative project makes a great contribution to close the gap to improve evidence for innovation policy." Professor Beth Webster (Swinburne University of Technology) also acknowledged that "access to a large number of firm-level observations via BLADE puts Australia on the frontier of business research and allows researchers to estimate, with greater precision and nuance, the main drivers of economic growth."

The project also demonstrates a model for future partnerships between government departments and the university sector for research directly relevant to current policy initiatives, such as the current Research and Development Tax Incentive Program.

Future analysis of this type, using integrated confidentialised data in the BLADE, will allow for the use of existing data in policy design and program evaluation. It is one of a number of ways the ABS is engaging with partners to improve the value and use of integrated data.

Case Study 2: The Multi-Agency Data Integration Project (MADIP)

The Multi-Agency Data Integration Project (MADIP) is a partnership between the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Taxation Office, the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Social Services. The project is in an evaluation phase and has brought important national datasets together to explore how to make better use of existing public data for policy analysis, research, and statistical purposes.

The MADIP has securely linked existing Medicare, government payments, personal income tax, and 2011 Census data. The linked data has enabled analyses of socio-economic outcomes and trends to inform policy and program development. The case study below showcases the type of new policy insights which can be discovered by bringing together data assets from across the Government.

"The most effective government policies and programs are those informed by high quality evidence. High quality evidence is built on accurate and comprehensive data. The MADIP has demonstrated the value of data integration as a way of shedding light on the performance of government programs and services, helping to determine the extent to which they are delivering outcomes."

Dr Steven Kennedy

Deputy Secretary, Innovation & Transformation, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Privacy and security

The privacy and confidentiality of personal information is maintained through strong legislative protections as well as best practice data management. MADIP data can only be accessed via secure systems, and access is restricted to approved users for approved purposes. The MADIP complies with the *Privacy Act 1988* and with the legislative responsibilities of each party. MADIP data has the added protection of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, which requires that no data is released in a manner that is likely to enable an individual to be identified.

Looking to the future

Evaluation of the project to date has demonstrated the potential value of linking existing public data. Streamlining data sharing and access arrangements can enable greater efficiencies, and inform decision making within government and the community.

The evaluation of the MADIP has noted that additional data, particularly longitudinal data, would be extremely useful for policy analysis, research and statistical purposes. It has also noted that there would be a considerable benefit in broadening access to integrated public data in a manner that maintains the confidentiality of individuals.

The next steps are to complete the evaluation of the MADIP and build on the lessons from this feasibility phase by putting in place arrangements that make better use of existing public data, safely and securely. This will contribute to the development of enduring statistical data assets under the Data Integration Partnership for Australia initiative.

Case Study: Investigating patterns of Medicare expenditure for Age Pension recipients

Mapping linked 2011 Census and Medicare data from MADIP has provided new insights into health care costs and revealed regional differences in health service use by older Australians.

Government policy objective

To improve older Australians' access to health care services by understanding the geographic patterns of Medicare use.

Geospatial analysis of average Medicare expenditure by Age Pension recipients was undertaken to identify expenditure patterns by region (see Figures 1 and 2). The analysis showed that major population centres have high Medicare expenditure per capita, but also that regional and remote areas in NSW (such as the Mid North Coast and the Far West, respectively) have significantly higher expenditure per capita than such areas in the other States and Territories. These findings can help inform policy and support the allocation of resources to the people and places that need it most.

“... one of the most exciting emerging capabilities is integrated datasets. They offer the greatest opportunity for Government to prioritise resources in high cost areas like health, welfare and education; better allocate the limited funding for important services; target interventions and programs to deliver better outcomes; and reduce duplicative collection and analysis costs.

The Multi-Agency Data Integration Project is one of these integration projects.”

Hon. Angus Taylor, MP

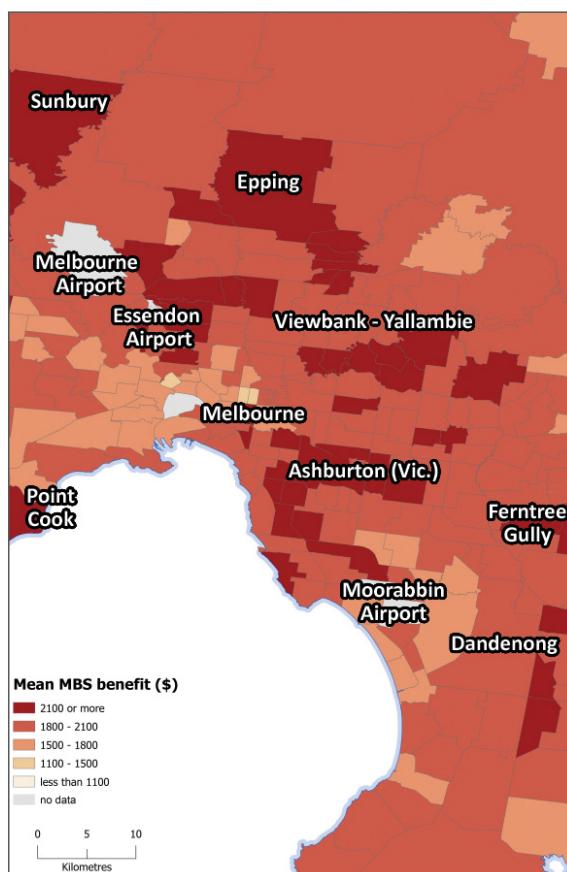
Assistant Minister for Cities and Digital Transformation

**Figure 1**

Regional differences to mean Medicare benefits paid to Age Pensioners in Sydney, 2011

**Figure 2**

Regional differences to mean Medicare benefits paid to Age Pensioners in Melbourne, 2011



Across Australia, Medicare services are used by more Age Pension recipients living in the major population centres of each state and territory than those in regional and remote areas.

These maps of Sydney and Melbourne illustrate the further variations in the use of Medicare Services within capital cities. In Sydney (Figure 1), older Australians on the Age Pension make high use of Medicare Services. By contrast, in Melbourne (Figure 2), the use of Medicare services by older Australians on the Age Pension varies considerably from suburb to suburb.

This analysis demonstrates how the better use of existing public data can help inform the development of health policy and the allocation of health care resources to improve older Australians' access to health care services.

These findings could shed light on policy issues around access to health services and service provision issues such as overprovision, prevalence of health conditions, and demographic factors which warrant further investigation.

Case Study 3: Experimental Land Accounts – a collaboration with Geoscience Australia

Governments need reliable information about changes in the use, condition and value of land in Australia, and how this relates to broader economic activity and the state of our environment. This information is used in policy making and spending decisions in land management and economic development. Statistical organisations are well placed to provide this vital information by integrating geospatial and environmental data with a range of economic indicators.

The ABS uses the UN System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) Central Framework to guide the production of data concerning the environment and economy. Land Accounts form the foundation of all environment-economic accounts, and the ABS has produced a series of Experimental Land Accounts across several jurisdictions in Australia. Rather than collecting the required data itself, the ABS sources and integrates data from a number of government organisations to produce these Land Accounts.

An important input to Land Accounts is data about land cover, both the biophysical cover and the built environment. In recent decades, Earth observation from satellites and other sources has enhanced our ability to consistently observe and monitor the environment. Earth observations are more than merely pictures of the Earth – the data they contain can tell us about the Earth's surface, waters and atmosphere. Through the application of geoscientific expertise and capabilities the raw satellite observations can be used to detect and map land cover.

Geoscience Australia (GA) is the lead agency in the Australian Government providing Earth observation services, expert advice and capabilities, and information for decision makers. The ABS works in partnership with GA to realise the value of geospatial data and Earth observations to enhance the production of official statistics in Australia. A combination of high level engagement and technical collaboration has strengthened a productive and mutually beneficial inter-agency relationship. This partnership has been critical in ensuring that GA's Dynamic Land Cover Data (DLCD), a consistent national dataset of land cover, has been available for the production of Experimental Land Accounts.

The use of the DLCD time-series in Land Accounts provides a “line of sight” between Earth observation data produced by GA and the information available to policy makers via statistical products produced by the ABS. This has motivated GA to continue the production of DLCD, and GA has worked closely with the ABS on the release of a new version of DLCD for Australia. This new data became available in time for the preparation of the ‘Land Account: Queensland, Experimental Estimates, 2011–2016’ publication by the ABS, which was released in June 2017.

The ABS and GA are collaborating further on a demonstration of the use of products derived from the Landsat imagery time-series in Digital Earth Australia to produce official statistics on land condition across Australia. The results of this work are due to be released in an ABS environmental-economic accounting publication in 2017–18.

“The partnership we have with the ABS is helping us to showcase the use of the fundamental geographic information we provide for the nation, and we are quietly enabling better decisions to be made via the products released by the ABS. Through the partnership we are also building a better understanding of the needs of our users, which in turn helps us grow our geoscientific capabilities. We truly value the opportunity to work closely with the ABS to identify and resolve issues, explore ideas and look to the future together.”

Trevor Dhu

Program Director, Digital Earth Australia, National Earth and Marine Observations Branch, Geoscience Australia

Case Study 4: Making a difference – the ABS DataLab

Detailed statistical data is becoming easier to access for a growing number of users across Australia through the ABS Data Laboratory (DataLab). The DataLab provides secure access to detailed microdata – the specific variables recorded for each individual respondent – to authorised users for research, policy and statistical research purposes. Initially limited to physical on-site access, DataLab now provides users with virtual access to ABS microdata.

Access to ABS microdata in the DataLab maintains confidentiality and protects privacy, and assesses disclosure risk using the 'Five Safes Framework'. All users sign a legally binding undertaking to use the microdata in an appropriate way. They also undertake mandatory training and all outputs are checked by ABS staff prior to release from the secure IT environment. This enables the ABS to provide users with access to detailed microdata files safely and securely and help them make the most effective use of data.

Over 350 people from 40 different organisations have been trained to use the DataLab. These include a growing number of staff from a range of Australian, state and territory governments, as well as a steady stream of academic researchers.

The DataLab is also enabling the ABS to provide leadership across government in data sharing and collaboration via a Trusted Access Model. This model ensures that effective, secure and mutually beneficial access to detailed microdata is managed through partnerships based on the trustworthiness and capability of users, as well as the protections of the data and delivery system.

Heather Crawford is an experienced data analyst and social researcher from the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University. She had been a long time user of the physical DataLab, but was frustrated by the inconvenience of having to visit an ABS office to do her work and the lack of up-to-date statistical analysis tools.

The ABS improved Heather's user experience by providing her with up-to-date versions of analytical software and allowing virtual access to the DataLab from her own office. These changes improved the timeliness of analytical results and have enabled Heather to undertake more in-depth analysis.

One example of how Heather has used the DataLab to help inform policy through data analysis relates to the closure of the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme in 2015.

For over 30 years, the CDEP scheme had offered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with an alternative to welfare. Heather's use of the DataLab under-pinned her contributions to the 2016 ANU research publication '*Better than welfare? Work and livelihoods for Indigenous Australians after CDEP*'. The publication has helped policy makers understand the consequences of the closure the CDEP scheme and provided them with an evidence base from which to develop future policy reforms that are better than CDEP in generating improved livelihood options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This in-depth analysis would not have been possible without the DataLab.

Case Study 5: Working with Data61 to Improve the NationalMap

The ABS is empowering other organisations to source ABS statistics using their own tools, helping to fulfil the ABS vision of unleashing the power of statistics for a better Australia.

NationalMap, hosted by the **data.gov.au** website, offers a platform for discovering and visualising a broad range of government and non-government datasets across various geographies of Australia.

CSIRO's Data61 has been working with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to improve the usability, functionality and interactivity of NationalMap.

In 2016–17, the ABS collaborated with Data61 to develop a better way to provide ABS statistics directly to NationalMap, enhancing its functionality. This included increasing the amount of ABS data available and ensuring that NationalMap can always display the latest ABS statistics – without having to be manually updated.

These improvements were made possible by upgrades to the ABS's Data Services in September 2016 that included a new developer-friendly data format, SDMX-JSON, that allows our external users to directly source ABS statistics.

The NationalMap platform has a number of features to maximise the use of ABS data:

- It brings together a broad range of data collections from a variety of government and non-government sources
- Data is displayed in an interactive map, making it easier for users to understand geographically displayed data
- The value of data is enhanced because it can be displayed together with a variety of other data to allow analysis
- Users can incorporate their own data into the platform for display with existing datasets
- The NationalMap technology can be embedded into other websites to enable data to be easily found and displayed.

The cross-government collaboration between Data61 and ABS has been mutually beneficial and is an example of how agencies can work together to enhance the usability of government services for the Australian public.

Arthur Street, Senior Software Engineer from Data61 was responsible for the project and remarked "*ABS has made an incredibly rich and varied range of data available via its SDMX API. As a result we have been able to add lots of new datasets to **NationalMap.gov.au** – from population forecasts in 2036, to where the most fruit and nut orchards are – which we expect will be put to lots of interesting new uses.*"

The use of ABS Data Services ensures the latest ABS statistics are always available through NationalMap as well as other platforms in the future. Best of all it extends the scope, use and usefulness of ABS data.

Case Study 6: The Freight Performance Measurement Project – a collaboration with the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics

Since the late 1960s, the amount of road freight in Australia has increased tenfold: from just over 20 billion tonne-kilometres a year, to over 200 billion tonne-kilometres in 2015–16. Building a better understanding of road freight movements in Australia helps to identify road infrastructure bottlenecks and establish priorities to better inform road infrastructure investment decisions.

Throughout 2016 the ABS partnered with the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) to investigate new ways of collecting and analysing road freight statistics as part of the Public Sector Data Management Project led by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. This pilot study is known as the Freight Performance Measurement Project.

Road transport in Australia is a highly competitive, efficient, and strongly regulated industry. In a fast growing industry like road freight, a lack of regular, up-to-date information has hindered effective decisions about where and when to invest for both the public and private sectors.

Road freight companies have devices fitted to their vehicles that record GPS coordinates at time-stamped intervals, along with information such as speed and fuel usage. This administrative data, known as telematics, has the potential to provide a less burdensome, more cost-effective and more timely source of road freight statistics in comparison to traditional survey based data collection methods.

The ABS contributed expertise in new data analytics techniques to the project, including further development of GLIDE¹³. GLIDE, an ABS developed platform, allows complex data in a variety of formats and from multiple sources to be linked and analysed in an interactive, visual manner. It provides tools for visualising data in different ways – such as via interactive maps. Using the GLIDE prototype, the project was able to produce freight specific traffic volumes and travel times along major corridors, and then drill down to identify congested freight network locations. GLIDE also enabled the visualisation of infrastructure used by freight vehicles, such as key freight routes and truck stops.

The Freight Performance Measurement Project has demonstrated the feasibility of using freight vehicle telematics data to provide regular road freight statistics and has shown the utility of GLIDE to identify congested road freight network locations and calculate average travel times on major freight routes.

Dr Gary Dolman of BITRE said “*For BITRE, the joint collaboration with ABS on the Freight Performance Measurement Project, helped better identify and engage with key stakeholders, and lent more authority and credibility to the project when discussing with external stakeholders. The resources, assistance and support provided by the Emerging Data and Methods Team was invaluable to processing the pilot study sample data and developing preliminary results and effectively communicating those results back to key stakeholders.*”

This collaborative project illustrates the value of integrating existing data to produce new information and insights that, in turn, inform important decisions. It is one of a number of current ABS data integration projects being undertaken in partnership with other government agencies using new and emerging statistical techniques.

For more information please see the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet Public Sector Data Management Project.

¹³ Graphically-Linked Information Discovery Environment.



SECTION THREE

MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY



Chapter 5

Corporate governance



Introduction

The ABS, as an agency of the Australian Government, is accountable to the Parliament, and ultimately to the public, through the Treasury ministers, the Parliamentary committee process and the tabling of its annual report.

As the Accountable Authority for the ABS, the Australian Statistician is required to establish and maintain an appropriate system of risk oversight and management for the ABS and an appropriate system of internal controls. The ABS's Internal Control Framework sets out corporate governance structures and processes. This assists ABS staff members to undertake their responsibilities effectively, in a way that meets community expectations of public accountability, probity and openness.

Corporate governance arrangements ensure the effective operation of the ABS, including transparency in decision-making, operation and accountability by promoting strong leadership, sound management and effective planning and review processes.

In early 2017, a governance review was undertaken, commissioned from Nous Consulting. Subsequent decisions by the Australian Statistician resulted in amendments to the ABS governance framework – replacing some committees, introducing new ones and establishing an Executive Board.

Governance committees

An important feature of ABS corporate governance is the role played by governance committees, which are active in developing policies and strategies, identifying ABS priorities, assessing and responding to risks and opportunities, and monitoring ABS performance.

The major governance committees in place during 2016–17, noting the changes since the Governance review was implemented in April 2017, are outlined in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Governance committees for 2016–17

Executive Leadership Group (replaced by Executive Board in April 2017)	The Executive Leadership Group (ELG) advised the Australian Statistician; its role was to provide strategic oversight of the organisation and determine policy. ELG met fortnightly to ensure high level and ongoing attention was given to strategic issues affecting the future of the organisation, including statistical business transformation, statistical risk management and strategic client engagement. ELG set the strategic directions for the ABS and referred its strategic decisions to the Senior Management Group for implementation. ELG membership consisted of the Australian Statistician (Chair), the Deputy Australian Statisticians and the General Manager, Strategic Partnerships and Projects Division.
Executive Board (est. April 2017)	The Executive Board is a decision-making board, chaired by the Australian Statistician, to provide leadership and strategic oversight of the ABS. The Executive Board provides advice to the Australian Statistician in order for him, as the authorised decision maker under the PGPA Act, to determine direction, policy, priorities, and to ensure the efficient, economical and ethical operations of the ABS. The Chair performs a leadership role in the conduct and direction of the Executive Board and has the majority vote and final decision in the event of non-consensus. Membership consists of the Australian Statistician; all Deputy Australian Statisticians; the General Manager Finance, Risk and Planning Division; the General Manager People, Culture and Communication Division; and a General Manager from the Statistical Services Group for a two year appointment.
Australian Statistics Advisory Council	The Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) is the ABS's key advisory body and is established under the <i>Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975</i> . ASAC provides independent advice to the Minister responsible for the ABS and the Australian Statistician on improvement of statistical services, longer-term statistical priorities and other relevant matters. It also reports to the Parliament annually.
Statistical Strategy Committee	The Statistical Strategy Committee (SSC) is an advisory committee to the Deputy Australian Statistician, Statistical Services Group, on the ABS statistical work program; outcomes of strategic importance are reported to the Executive Board. Key areas include statistical risk management, cross-cutting statistical issues and overall priorities, and strategic relationships. Membership includes the Deputy Australian Statistician (Chair) and General Managers from the Statistical Services Group, General Managers from the Transformation Group, and the General Manager from the Census and Statistical Network Services Division.
Statistical Business Transformation Program Executive Board	The Statistical Business Transformation (SBT) Program is the flagship transformation initiative of the ABS. The SBT Program Executive Board is chaired by the Australian Statistician with membership consisting of the three Deputy Australian Statisticians and three external members: Mr David Whiteing (CIO, Commonwealth Bank of Australia), Mr David Borthwick (Senior Consultant) and Mr Peter Harper (Senior Consultant and former Deputy Australian Statistician). The Board has the overarching authority of the SBT Program and is responsible for investment decisions and associated commitments to government, ensuring the ongoing alignment of the SBT Program with the strategic direction and goals of the ABS.
Statistical Business Transformation Program Delivery Board	The Statistical Business Transformation (SBT) Program Delivery Board is responsible for driving the program and delivering outcomes and benefits.
2016 Census Program Board	This Board provided oversight and support to ensure the Program met its stated targets and delivered on its goals for the 2016 Census. The Board was chaired by the Chief Operating Officer. It monitored and reviewed the performance of Census projects through monthly Census 2016 project progress reports, reviewed risks and issues, and provided advice to the Census Program Manager and Program Owner.

2021 Census Board (Terms of Reference in DRAFT as at 30 June 2017)	The 2021 Census Board's key responsibilities include endorsement of the 2021 Census strategy, overseeing maintenance and achievement of 2021 Census Program objectives, and monitoring the planning, development, operation and delivery phases of the 2021 Census Program. The Board, chaired by the Australian Statistician, will also advise on the resolution of issues relating to scope, trade-offs and investment decisions; provide oversight on all aspects of risk management of the 2021 Census Program and its constituent projects; and advise on strategic relationships with governments and key stakeholders.
2021 Census Delivery Committee (Terms of Reference in DRAFT as at 30 June 2017)	The 2021 Census Delivery Committee is chaired by the Deputy Australian Statistician, Census and Enabling Services Group; it has specific responsibility for advising on the maintenance and achievement of 2021 Census Program objectives. The Committee will ensure adherence to agreed design principles and resolve any discrepancies, including those related to scope and budget. Members will advise on risk mitigation, provide assurance for operational stability and effectiveness through the 2021 Census delivery cycle, and manage the impact of change.
Senior Management Group (ceased April 2017)	The Senior Management Group (SMG) was replaced by four separate committees, as outlined below. SMG was an advisory body chaired by the Chief Operating Officer that met weekly. Its focus was cross-cutting issues supporting ABS transformation, managing risks and ensuring the efficient delivery of the ABS work program. SMG meetings also addressed statistical and corporate policy, financial management, dissemination matters, and human resource management. SMG membership consisted of the Chief Operating Officer (Chair) and all General Managers.
Security Committee (est. April 2017)	The Security Committee is an advisory committee, chaired by the Deputy Australian Statistician, Census and Enabling Services Group, established to ensure the ABS complies with its legal and legislative requirements related to security. Its purpose is to ensure there are adequate internal policies, guidelines and effective practices which meet the security and privacy-related requirements of relevant government policy, i.e. the Protective Security Policy Framework and Information Security Manual.
Resource Prioritisation and Finance Committee (est. April 2017)	The Resource Prioritisation and Finance Committee is an advisory committee, chaired by the Deputy Australian Statistician, Census and Enabling Services Group, established to ensure there is cross-Group engagement on the planning, prioritisation, allocation and monitoring of ABS resources. The Committee's advice to the Chair reflects ABS strategic priorities, and monitors allocations and expenditure to ensure rigour, discipline and transparency. In addition, the Committee advises on adjustments to resource allocations in response to high priority in-year and emerging issues, supports effective risk management frameworks and provides feedback and advice on relevant policies.
Statistical Network Services and Technology Committee (est. April 2017)	The Statistical Network Services and Technology Committee is an advisory committee, chaired by the Deputy Australian Statistician, Census and Enabling Services Group, established to ensure there is cross-Group engagement on the delivery of technology and network services across the ABS. The Committee provides advice to the Chair on strategic directions of data acquisition and provider management functions in conjunction with technical and statistical dissemination services.
People Committee (Human Resources, Culture, Partnerships) (est. April 2017)	The People Committee is an advisory committee, chaired by the General Manager of the People, Culture and Communication Division, established to ensure there is cross-Group engagement on the monitoring, prioritisation and operational decisions associated with people, culture and partnerships functions of the ABS. The Committee also provides input and advice to the Chair on strategic matters prior to their consideration by the Executive Board, and monitors progress on the implementation of the People and Culture Action Plans.

National Health and Safety Committee	The National Health and Safety Committee (NHSC) is the forum at which the ABS, its workers and their representatives discuss organisational health and safety matters and issues. The NHSC plays a key role in ABS work health and safety (WHS) governance by receiving and considering information and issues, making decisions and recommendations on organisational WHS matters, and identifying safety matters for appropriate decision-making by the People Committee.
Disclosure Review Committee	The Disclosure Review Committee (DRC) advises the Chief Methodologist on the disclosure risks and mitigation strategies associated with the dissemination of microdata and, on an exceptional basis, aggregate statistics. The DRC may also initiate reviews to continuously improve procedures, processes and policies, or undertake investigations where warranted or where directed by the Executive Board.
Protective Security Management Committee (replaced April 2017)	This Committee was replaced by the Security Committee. The Protective Security Management Committee was chaired by a Deputy Australian Statistician; it ensured, via the security framework, that both physical and computer security were maintained. The Committee was a key means of ensuring the ABS met its legal requirement not to divulge identifiable information and ensured there was policy to meet the security and privacy related requirements of legislation.
Economics Statistics Advisory Group	The Economic Statistics Advisory Group (ESAG) is an advisory committee to the Deputy Australian Statistician, Statistical Services Group. It is an important mechanism through which the user community can provide feedback on current and planned ABS developments in the field of economic statistics. This Group nurtures the interaction between senior ABS executives and key user groups including influential researchers, policy advisors and decision makers who have a sound appreciation of the use and value of economic statistics.
Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group	The Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group (PSSAG) is an advisory committee to the Deputy Australian Statistician, Statistical Services Group. It is an important mechanism through which the user community can provide feedback on current and planned ABS developments in the field of population and social statistics. This Group nurtures the interaction between the ABS and informed users of population and social statistics to gain valuable input from their knowledge and expertise.
State Statistical Forum	The State Statistical Forum (SSF), chaired by the Deputy Australian Statistician, Statistical Services Group, is an information sharing and engagement body. It supports effective interaction between the ABS and the states and territories to address common statistical issues.
Methodology Advisory Committee	The Methodology Advisory Committee (MAC), chaired by the Chief Methodologist, is an expert advisory group of statisticians and data scientists drawn mainly from, but not restricted to, universities across Australia and New Zealand. The function of the MAC is to provide expert advice to the Chief Methodologist on selected methodological issues that arise across the production of national statistics e.g. survey design, data linkage, analysis, confidentialisation and dissemination.
ABS Management Meetings	ABS Management Meetings play a major role in setting and communicating ABS strategic directions and priorities. The meetings are held twice a year and involve all ABS Senior Executive Staff (SES). They provide an opportunity for SES to discuss big-picture issues, take stock of lessons learnt, look ahead and discuss strategic issues and plans. Recently the Management Meetings have included workshops on risk management, developing a high performing workforce and 2021 Census planning.
ABS Audit Committee	The ABS Audit Committee provides independent assurance and assistance to the Australian Statistician on the ABS's financial and performance reporting responsibilities, risk oversight and management, and the system of internal controls, including those applied to ensure legislative compliance and the execution of ABS functions. The Committee meets a minimum of five times a year. It consists of five members, four of whom are external; an external member (currently Ms Jennifer Clark) chairs the Committee. External member appointments are based on personal qualities, experience and skills, including the ability to demonstrate independence on matters before the committee.

Risk oversight and management

The ABS Risk Management Framework aligns with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and is subject to continual improvement. The Framework ensures there is a mechanism for monitoring and identifying shifts in risk exposure and the emergence of new risks. It also articulates tolerances for new risks and actions required when risks reach certain levels.

In addition to general risk management, the Accountable Authority Instructions (AAIs) and the Framework identify mechanisms for specialist risk management which address persistent risks. These include: fraud (managed consistently with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework); work health and safety; information and communication technology security; and disclosure risk (relating to privacy and confidentiality which is part of ABS core business).

The ABS Audit Committee takes an overarching perspective of the independent assurance activities of the ABS, providing independent assurance and assistance to the Australian Statistician on the ABS's financial and performance reporting responsibilities; risk oversight and management; and system of internal controls, including those applied to ensure legislative compliance and the execution of the functions of the ABS.

In recent years, the focus of the ABS has been on its management of statistical risk. However, the events of the 2016 Census highlighted the need for the ABS to increase its overall risk management capability. Therefore, improved enterprise risk management and strengthening the foundational elements have become a priority. The ABS is revising its Risk Management Framework to better manage strategic risks, enrich the risk culture and enhance internal capability. The ABS aims to embed risk management into key processes, including strategic planning, governance arrangements, policy development, program delivery and broader decision-making.

Fraud control

The ABS has a Fraud Control Plan to provide the framework and associated guidance for fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and data collection procedures and processes that meet the specific needs of the ABS and broader government obligations. It is supported by a Fraud Risk Assessment which records identified fraud risks, treatment strategies, responsibilities, dates for implementation and reporting obligations.

The ABS Fraud Control Plan is reviewed and updated two-yearly. The fraud risk assessment is reviewed twice a year or more frequently where the ABS has identified significant changes to fraud risk exposure.

The ABS Audit Committee has oversight of ABS fraud control activity.

Security

Security of information provided to the ABS is key to maintaining the high levels of trust that enable the ABS to operate effectively and fulfil its mission.

All ABS premises are physically secured against unauthorised access. Entry is through electronically controlled access systems, activated by individually coded access cards and monitored by closed circuit television. Areas of the ABS producing particularly sensitive data, such as main economic indicators, are subject to further protective security measures.

The ABS computer network has a secure gateway, which allows connection to internet services including the ABS website. The secure gateway was established in accordance with Australian Government guidelines and is reviewed annually by an accredited independent assessor. Access to ABS computing systems is based on personal identifiers and strong authentication services. Databases are accessible only by approved users. The computer



systems are regularly monitored and usage is audited. There were no unauthorised access incidents into ABS computing systems during 2016–17.

In August 2016, the Population Census was impacted by a distributed denial of service (DDoS) incident. This occurred due to two underlying issues with the eCensus: the system had deficiencies in its DDoS protections, and the system heavily focused on ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of data at the expense of system availability. The Review of the Events Surrounding the 2016 eCensus by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet confirmed that there was no compromise to the security of data. In response to the Census DDoS incident, stronger DDoS protections were implemented for the eCensus and ABS websites. In addition, a comprehensive review of security within the ABS was undertaken.

Privacy

As an Australian Government agency, the ABS must comply with the *Privacy Act 1988*, including the Australian Privacy Principles. These govern the way personal information about any person – including staff, clients and respondents – should be collected, stored, used and disclosed. The ABS's Privacy Policy is published on the ABS website

<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/Home/Privacy+Policy>

The ABS has a Privacy Officer who advises on privacy issues internally, investigates allegations of misuse or unauthorised disclosures regarding personal information, and monitors the external environment to keep up-to-date on privacy issues that could affect ABS operations.

As in previous years, during 2016–17 the ABS participated in Privacy Awareness Week. To conclude Privacy Awareness Week, the Australian Information Commissioner spoke to ABS staff about the implementation of an APS Privacy Code in July 2018 and the introduction of the notifiable data breaches scheme in February 2018. The ABS will review its practices, procedures and systems in light of these legislative changes, and will continue to work closely with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner during this process.

The Review of the Events Surrounding the 2016 eCensus, undertaken by Alastair MacGibbon, contained a number of privacy related recommendations. The ABS has accepted all recommendations of the review and will implement all of the recommendations in 2017.

Information Publication Scheme

As an agency subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act), the ABS is required to publish information to the public as part of the Information Publication Scheme (IPS). Each agency must display a plan on its website showing what information it publishes in accordance with the IPS requirements.

The ABS's IPS plan is available on the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/information+publication+scheme>

Statistical Clearing House

The Statistical Clearing House (SCH) is the mandatory central clearance point for business surveys that are run, funded, or conducted on behalf of the Australian Government. Its key objectives are to minimise the load placed on businesses by Australian Government surveys, reduce unnecessary survey duplication, and ensure surveys are fit-for-purpose. In 2016–17, 163 surveys were submitted for clearance. Of these, 75 received a full SCH review and approval, 19 were exempt from full review, 12 were cancelled by agencies after submission, 22 were still being reviewed, and 35 were out of scope of SCH review. Surveys categorised as 'Exempt from full review' are those where the overall respondent burden is considered minimal.

With a view to improving cost effectiveness and ensuring that we prioritise our activities to fit within our resource constraints, the ABS, after consultation with the Government, has decided to adopt a different operating model for managing respondent load. Commencing from end August 2017, the SCH will cease operations and Commonwealth agencies will become directly responsible for minimising survey burden on businesses, with the ABS providing support by making materials available to assist survey development and through an optional user pays advisory service.

External scrutiny

Review of the Events Surrounding the 2016 eCensus

The Government undertook a review into the 2016 eCensus. Alastair MacGibbon, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Cyber Security, was tasked to review the Census night events, broader Census planning and delivery matters, and implications across whole-of-government. The report was finalised on 13 October 2016 and was first tabled in Parliament on 24 November 2016 and is available from the Australian Parliament House website <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22publications%2Ftabledpapers%2Fa41f4f25-a08e-49a7-9b5f-d2c8af94f5c5%22>.

The ABS agreed to all recommendations of the review, completing seven by the end of June 2017. The remaining two recommendations are expected to be completed by December 2017.

Census – Senate Inquiry

On 31 August, the Senate referred the 2016 Census to the Senate Economics References Committee for inquiry and report by 24 November. A public hearing was held on 25 October. The two key changes under review were the move to an eCensus with the majority of census forms to be completed electronically; and the retention of name and address information for a period of up to 4 years to enable more extensive uses of Census data. The report of the Senate Committee is available on the Australian Parliament House website www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Economics/2016Census/Report.

Other reviews

During 2016–17, the ABS was the subject of a Functional and Efficiency Review. These reviews provide the Government with advice on opportunities to streamline programs, improve systems and reduce expenditure in its operations. This review of the ABS was undertaken by David Tune AO with the assistance of Nous Consulting. The ABS is one of 11 agencies identified in the 2017–18 Budget Papers as being subject to a review of this kind.

There were no other external reviews in 2016–17 that had a significant effect on the operations of the entity, with no reports issued by the Australian Information Commissioner or the Commonwealth Ombudsman. There were no individual or administrative review decisions of significance to the ABS.

There were no adverse comments relating to the ABS from the Auditor-General, the Commonwealth Ombudsman, or courts or tribunals during 2016–17.



Submissions to parliamentary committees

Table 5.2: ABS submissions to parliamentary committees in 2016–17

Committee/Inquiry	Description of submission/information provided
Productivity Commission Data Inquiry into Data Availability and Use	In July 2016, the ABS provided a submission to the Productivity Commission Public Inquiry on Data Availability and Use. Their final report was handed to the Australian Government on 31 March 2017.
Productivity Commission Inquiry into the National Education Evidence Base	The ABS provided a submission, for the draft report in September 2016, for the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the National Education Evidence Base. Their final report was handed to the Australian Government on 9 December 2016.
Senate Economics References Committee 2016 Census: issues of trust	In September 2016, the ABS provided a submission to the Senate Economics References Committee 2016 Census: issues of trust inquiry. This Inquiry looked into the preparation, administration and management of the 2016 Census by the ABS. The ABS appeared before the Committee's Public Hearing held on 25 October 2016 and also made a supplementary submission.
Senate Community Affairs References Committee Future of Australia's aged care sector workforce	In November 2016, the ABS provided a submission to and appeared before the Community Affairs References Committee Inquiry into the future of Australia's aged care sector workforce.
Report 455 – Recommendation 2 Parliamentary Delegation to New Zealand and Fiji by Members of the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (JCPAA)	In November 2016, the ABS provided a response to Recommendation 2 to examine New Zealand's Integrated Data Infrastructure and whether this approach could be adopted in Australia.
Senate Community Affairs References Committee Violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings, including the gender and age related dimensions, and the particular situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability	In November 2016, the ABS provided a submission to the Community Affairs References Committee Inquiry. The submission outlined violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings, including the gender- and age-related dimensions, and the particular situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability.
Senate Community Affairs References Committee Adequacy of existing residential care arrangements available for young people with severe physical, mental or intellectual disabilities in Australia	In December 2016, the ABS contributed to the Australian Government response.
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources Inquiry into water use efficiency in Australian agriculture	In March 2017, the ABS provided a submission to the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources for the Inquiry into water use efficiency in Australian agriculture.
Senate Select Committee on Strengthening Multiculturalism	In May 2017, the ABS provided a submission to the Select Committee on Strengthening Multiculturalism. The submission outlined the statistical information available in ABS surveys and products to assist in addressing the terms of reference for this Inquiry.
Senate Education and Employment Legislation Committee Australian Education Amendment Bill 2017	In June 2017, the ABS appeared before the Education and Employment Committee on the Australian Education Amendment Bill. The ABS presented evidence as to the ABS data available for socio-economic modelling for school funding.

Procurement

ABS procurement and contracting activities are undertaken in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules. These rules are applied consistently to procurement activities through the Accountable Authority Instructions, supporting operational guidelines and procurement framework.

Information on procurements expected to be undertaken are advertised in an annual procurement plan, available from the AusTender website www.tenders.gov.au. This plan is reviewed and updated throughout the year.

No contracts with the value of \$100,000 or greater (inclusive of GST) were let during 2016–17 that did not provide for the Auditor-General to have access to the contractor's premises.

Initiatives to support small business

The ABS supports small business participation in the Australian Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance website www.finance.gov.au/procurement/statistics-on-commonwealth-purchasing-contracts/.

ABS procurement practices support SMEs by adopting whole-of-government solutions to simplify interactions. This includes using the Commonwealth Contracting Suite for low risk procurements valued under \$200,000.

The ABS recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Department of the Treasury website www.treasury.gov.au.

Consultancies

The ABS engages consultants when it requires specialist expertise or when independent research, review or assessment is required. Decisions to engage consultants during 2016–17 were made in accordance with the PGPA Act and related regulations, including the Commonwealth Procurement Rules and relevant internal policy.

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website www.tenders.gov.au.

During 2016–17, 44 new consultancy contracts were entered into at a value of \$3.6 million. In addition, 17 ongoing consultancy contracts will remain active after the 2016–17 year, involving total contract value of \$1.3 million (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Consultancy contracts from 2014–15 to 2016–17

	New consultancy contracts		Ongoing consultancy contracts	
	Number of new contracts	Amount (\$m)	Number of ongoing contracts	Amount (\$m)
2014–15	21	\$0.9	9	\$0.3
2015–16	14	\$4.9	3	\$0.1
2016–17	44	\$3.6	17	\$1.3

Exempt contracts

During the 2016–17 financial year the ABS did not exempt any contracts or standing offers from publication on AusTender on the basis that they would disclose exempt information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.



Asset management

The ABS's asset management policies are set out in the Accountable Authority Instructions and supporting financial management procedures, which is in accordance with relevant accounting standards and Department of Finance requirements. Further details on the ABS's asset policies are contained in note 2.2 of the Financial Statements.

An asset register records details of all assets held by the ABS. An annual stocktake process is conducted to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information held on the register.

The capital management plan sets out the ABS's longer-term asset requirements and funding sources for ongoing asset replacement and investment. The capital budget process is integrated with strategic planning and is conducted in conjunction with the annual operating budget process.

Advertising and market research

During 2016–17, the ABS conducted the following advertising campaign: the 2016 Census of Population and Housing (Census). This campaign was to raise awareness and drive participation in the 2016 Census. The advertising was also aimed at attracting candidates to apply for vacant positions relating to the 2016 Census.

Further information on those advertising campaigns is available at www.abs.gov.au and in the reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are available on the Department of Finance's website, at www.finance.gov.au.

Under section 311A of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, the ABS is required to disclose payments over \$13,000 (including GST) for advertising and market research.

During 2016–17, the ABS's total expenditure for advertising and market research over the reporting threshold was \$21,922,932 (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 Advertising and market research expenditure over \$13,000 in 2016–17

Organisation	Purpose	Expenditure (\$, GST inclusive)
Market research organisations		
DBM Consultants	2016 Census – Campaign evaluation research	500,582
OCR International	Formative research to inform communication strategy	96,000
Advertising (Campaign and non-campaign advertising)		
BWM Dentsu	2016 Census – Advertising creative agency	236,341
Dentsu Mitchell Media Australia Pty Ltd	2016 Census advertising and market research	19,580,881
Dentsu Mitchell Media Australia Pty Ltd	2016 General recruitment advertising	63,460
Public relations organisations		
Ethnic Communications	2016 Census – Management and implementation of media and public relations	869,578
Fenton Strategic Communications Pty Ltd	2016 Census – Management and implementation of media and public relations	289,378
King Content Pty Ltd	2016 Census – Management and implementation of media and public relations	286,712
Total expenditure over \$13,000		21,922,932

Chapter 6

Management of human resources



Introduction

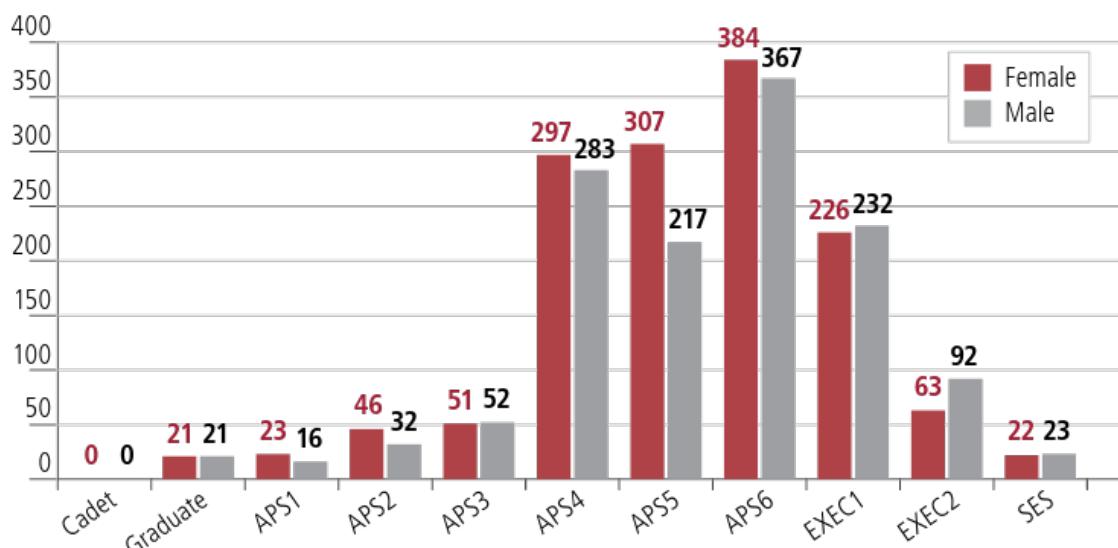
The importance of the human resource (HR) management function within the ABS has never been more apparent than in our current circumstances. Our people will ensure we transform the ABS, through new statistical infrastructure, systems and processes, to better meet Australia's need for quality information to inform important decisions.

As at 30 June 2017, there were 2,831 operative and inoperative staff (including 56 unpaid inoperative staff) employed at the ABS under the *Public Service Act 1999*: 1,347 males and 1,484 females.

There were also 1,740 staff employed to assist with data collection under Regulation 7 of the *Census and Statistics Regulation 2016*, and appointed as authorised officers under Section 16 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. Of these, 1,322¹⁴ were Census Field Officers and 418 were household survey interviewers.

Figure 6.1 and Tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 show the profile of ABS staff by employment classification and gender, and by location and type of employment for operative and paid inoperative staff. Staff employed under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* (interviewers and Census field staff), and unpaid inoperative staff are excluded.

Figure 6.1: Total employees by classification and gender, 30 June 2017^{(a)(b)}



(a) Includes operative and paid inoperative, ongoing and non-ongoing staff.

(b) Excludes the Australian Statistician (statutory appointment).

¹⁴ All field staff had concluded their work on the 2016 Census at 30 June 2017.

Table 6.1: Total employees by classification, gender and employment type, at 30 June 2016 and 2017^{(a)(b)}

Classification	As at 30 June 2016					As at 30 June 2017					
	Ongoing		Non-ongoing			Ongoing		Non-ongoing			
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Total		Female	Male	Female	Male	Total
Cadet	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Graduate	72	58	0	0	130		21	21	0	0	42
APS1	2	1	17	17	37		2	0	21	16	39
APS2	1	5	96	76	178		1	3	45	29	78
APS3	32	28	79	76	215		21	17	30	35	103
APS4	200	186	116	120	622		230	217	67	66	580
APS5	340	242	68	53	703		286	200	21	17	524
APS6	410	373	35	67	885		367	332	17	35	751
EXEC1	245	252	17	18	532		217	221	9	11	458
EXEC2	72	90	8	7	177		60	85	3	7	155
SES	19	24	1	3	47		22	20	0	3	45
Total	1393	1259	437	437	3526		1227	1116	213	219	2775

(a) Includes operative and paid inoperative, ongoing and non-ongoing staff.

(b) Excludes the Australian Statistician (statutory appointment).

Table 6.2: Total employees by location, employment type and status, at 30 June 2016 and 2017^{(a)(b)}

	As at 30 June 2016					As at 30 June 2017				
	Ongoing		Non-ongoing			Ongoing		Non-ongoing		
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Canberra	1084	183	210	71	1548	954	160	117	40	1271
Dandenong	16	0	3	0	19	5	0	0	0	5
Geelong	111	4	10	80	205	126	5	48	94	273
Melbourne	275	56	77	14	422	241	55	30	8	334
Sydney	189	42	40	92	363	156	33	8	19	216
Darwin	31	6	23	0	60	15	5	0	0	20
Brisbane	176	28	37	5	246	147	35	4	1	187
Adelaide	142	58	43	10	253	135	55	15	4	209
Hobart	90	27	20	10	147	85	23	7	5	120
Perth	103	31	101	28	263	78	30	26	6	140
Total	2217	435	564	310	3526	1942	401	255	177	2775

(a) Includes operative and paid inoperative, ongoing and non-ongoing staff.

(b) Excludes the Australian Statistician (statutory appointment).

Table 6.3 indicates there were 21 women in the ABS Senior Executive Service (SES) at 30 June 2017, representing 51.2% of the total number of ongoing operative SES officers in the ABS. This number differs from Table 6.1 as it does not include outposted officers or non-ongoing officers.

Table 6.3: Number of ABS ongoing operative Senior Executive Staff (SES) by level, gender and year^(a)

Year (at 30 June)	SES Level			Gender		Total
	1	2	3	Male	Female	
2008	33	6	3	27	15	42
2009	26	7	3	26	10	36
2010	27	6	4	29	8	37
2011	26	7	4	26	11	37
2012	23	7	4	24	10	34
2013	28	8	4	30	10	40
2014	29	7	3	30	9	39
2015	26	6	2	26	8	34
2016	29	9	3	22	19	41
2017	30	9	2	20	21	41

(a) Includes only operative, substantive SES officers as at 30 June 2017. Excludes the Australian Statistician, who is a statutory office holder appointed under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, and SES officers outposted or seconded to another department, i.e. one SES Officer for 2008–10, 2011–12 and 2016–17.

ABS Workforce Strategy 2015–19

The *ABS Workforce Strategy 2015–19* provides a five-year strategic outlook for transforming our workforce through driving high performance. It is aligned with the ABS Corporate Plan, and focuses exclusively on the workforce (our people and culture) elements of transformation.

The four high level strategies outlined in the *ABS Workforce Strategy 2015–19* are:

- reshaping our workforce capability
- aligning our staffing profile and structure to a rationalised and responsive Forward Work Program
- building a high performing culture and improving our diversity
- improving our leadership to drive a high performing culture.

The *ABS Workforce Strategy 2015–2019* is supported by annual ABS People and Culture Action Plans which set out the national initiatives and actions to implement these strategies.

Flexible working environments

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) commenced rollout of its Flexible Working Environments strategy (FWE) in 2014. This strategy comprises three components:

- Activity Based Workplaces (ABW)
- Teleworking
- ICT enabling strategies



The FWE strategy aims to change the way the ABS undertakes its business by providing flexible work environments to support staff to achieve work/life balance to ensure healthy and productive lifestyles while meeting business needs.

A 2016 review of FWE implementation was informed by ABS staff responses to the 2015 and 2016 Australian Public Service State of the Service Surveys, responses to a survey of ABS staff who had moved to FWE, as well as management information such as the rate of unscheduled absences and lease costs.

The review provided a positive view of FWE in the ABS with high staff satisfaction with flexible working environments, increasing participation rates in teleworking, positive perceptions of improved productivity and managers reporting confidence in managing remotely located staff.

Management data indicates a general reduction in unscheduled absences from 3.8 to 3.3 days per full-time equivalent staff in the 12 months October 2015–16. The planned reduction in ABS's property portfolio by 50% to 30,000m² is on track, realising savings in operational costs including electricity, cleaning, repairs and maintenance.

Workplace diversity and inclusion in the ABS

The ABS is committed to providing an inclusive workplace culture and increasing the diversity of our workforce to better reflect the communities we serve. The *ABS Workforce Strategy 2015–2019* reaffirms the importance of recognising the diverse skills, perspectives and experiences of our employees.

The following action plans support inclusion and diversity in the ABS:

- *ABS Workplace Diversity Action Plan 2013–2017* (ABS cat. no. 1010.0)
- *ABS Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–2016* (ABS cat. no. 1011.0)
- *ABS Gender Diversity Action Plan 2014–17* (ABS cat. no. 1013.0).

The ABS People and Culture Action Plan 2017 & 2018 also contains actions to increase diversity, including:

- recruitment of staff with diversity of backgrounds, experiences and expertise
- embracing diversity of skills, thinking and experiences of staff
- providing a working environment that supports productive and flexible ways of working.

Workplace Diversity Action Plan

The *ABS Workplace Diversity Action Plan 2013–2017* demonstrates the organisation's continued commitment to identifying and addressing barriers to inclusion. The *Workplace Diversity Action Plan 2013–2017* sets out four key strategies:

- strengthening a respectful and inclusive work environment and culture
- improving our ability to attract, recruit and retain people of diverse backgrounds and targeting under-represented diversity groups (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people with disability)
- improving our understanding of workplace diversity issues and increasing the analysis and use of workplace diversity metrics
- as a statistical services provider, ensuring accessible services, products and data collection practices are provided for people with disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Reconciliation Action Plan

The ABS leads and coordinates statistical activity involving and relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and is committed to reconciliation.

The *ABS Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–2016* included the following actions:

- increase the recruitment, retention and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ABS (Table 6.4)
- build the capability of ABS employees to respond effectively to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities through respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture
- ensure ABS policies, programs and services effectively respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities
- develop the statistical literacy skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to enable them to make informed decisions about themselves, their families and their communities.

At 30 June 2017 staff who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples represented 0.9% of the total number of office-based staff in the ABS (excluding unpaid inoperatives).

Table 6.4: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed in the ABS, 2016–17^(a)

	30 June 2016	30 June 2017
Ongoing employees	30	22
Non-ongoing employees	7	4
Total	37	26

(a) Includes operative and paid inoperative office-based staff as at 30 June 2017.

Disability reporting mechanism

The *National Disability Strategy 2010–2020* sets out a ten-year national policy framework to improve the lives of people with disability, promote participation and create a more inclusive society. The ABS contributes to the whole-of-government two-yearly report which tracks progress against each of the six outcome areas of the Strategy and presents a picture of how people with disability are faring. This report can be found at www.dss.gov.au.

Since 2007–09 the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) has reported at a whole-of-government level in relation to disability via the *State of the Service Report* and the *APS Statistical Bulletin*. These reports are available at www.apsc.gov.au.

At 30 June 2017 staff who identified as having disability represented 2.5% of the total number of office-based staff in the ABS, excluding unpaid inoperatives (Table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Number of staff identifying as having disability employed in the ABS, 2016–17^(a)

	30 June 2016	30 June 2017
Ongoing employees	73	65
Non-ongoing employees	3	3
Total	76	68

(a) Includes operative and paid inoperative office-based staff as at 30 June 2017.



Gender Diversity Action Plan

The ABS *Gender Diversity Action Plan 2014–17* sets out the organisation's commitment to achieving gender diversity at all levels in the ABS. Its aim is to identify and remove barriers to allow women the same access to, and participation in, leadership roles as their male colleagues.

The ABS *Gender Diversity Action Plan 2014–17* sets out four key strategies:

- recruiting and deploying for diverse leadership (to ensure our SES selection processes are best practice and free from unintended bias)
- working flexibly (to support increased use of flexible job design arrangements for senior staff, both in terms of locations and working arrangements)
- staying connected (to ease the transition of staff entering into or returning from long periods of leave and capitalising on the talent and expertise of former ABS staff)
- building a more inclusive corporate culture (to promote a working environment where diverse leadership styles can flourish).

Table 6.6: Total employees by level and gender as at 30 June 2017^{(a)(b)}

Classification	Female	Male	Total
Cadet	0	0	0
Graduate	21	21	42
APS1	23	16	39
APS2	46	32	78
APS3	51	52	103
APS4	297	283	580
APS5	307	217	524
APS6	384	367	751
EXEC1	226	232	458
EXEC2	63	92	155
SES	22	23	45
Total	1440	1335	2775

(a) Includes operative and paid inoperative, ongoing and non-ongoing staff.

(b) Excludes the Australian Statistician (statutory appointment).

Multicultural access and equity

The ABS is committed to improving engagement and responding to the needs of Australians from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Strategies and policies are developed that are inclusive, and specific engagement strategies are developed as required. For example, the 2016 Census program employed Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Strategy Managers in each state to ensure appropriate stakeholder engagement with CALD communities and accurate counting of communities during the Census.

Key achievements in 2016–17

The Australian Statistician, David Kalisch, became a Male Champion for Change for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths in October 2016. Reflecting more focus on gender diversity in recruitment as part of Male Champions for Change initiatives, 57% of ongoing appointments to the ABS's senior executive service over the 2016–17 financial year were women. In addition, 57% of the members of the ABS's Executive Board (chaired by the Australian Statistician, providing strategic oversight of the ABS) were female as at 30 June 2017.

The ABS is committed to supporting the employment and career development of people with disability. The Disability in the Workplace Manager's Guide has been made available to all employees, and membership upgraded to the 'gold' level with the Australian Network on Disability (AND).

The ABS was shortlisted as a finalist for the 2016 Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) Award for Gender Equity in the Workplace, recognising excellence in gender equity initiatives and programs in the ABS.

The ABS used the APS RecruitAbility Scheme for all vacancies advertised during 2016–17. This scheme progresses an applicant with disability to a further stage in the recruitment process if they choose to opt into the scheme and meet the minimum requirements for the vacancy.

In 2017, 17% (8 people) of the organisation's total graduate intake (46) identified that they had a disability and were recruited.

Ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees graduated in December 2016 after successful completion of the 15 month Indigenous Australian Government Development Program (IAGDP) and advanced to the next APS level (APS4).

In 2017, the ABS used affirmative measures in the selection processes for three jobs targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In accordance with the Australian Government Guidelines on the Recognition of Sex and Gender, in 2016–17 the ABS enabled employees to select 'x' (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified) as their gender in our Pay and Leave system, and for this to be recognised and reflected in their personnel records. This was likewise available for 2016 Census respondents who were able to report their gender as 'other', recognising that individuals may identify as a sex or gender other than male or female.

The ABS increased its diversity employee networks. In addition to existing networks such as the Youmpla (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) Network and the Disability and Carers Network, the ABS added the following networks in 2016–17:

- the ABS Pride Network (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex (LGBTI) + community)
- the Gender Diversity Network
- the Leveraging Asperger's and Autism Network.

The number of Diversity Champions was increased to 11 SES members to support new and existing employee networks.

Diversity Champion representatives and Network observers were included as part of the membership of the new ABS People Committee to ensure strong focus on diversity in people governance oversight.

In 2016–17, the ABS became a member of the I CAN Network to support the establishment of the Leveraging Asperger's and Autism Network and also became a member of Pride in Diversity to support the newly formed Pride Network.



Training and development

In line with the *ABS Workforce Strategy 2015–2019* and the *ABS People and Culture Action Plan 2017 & 2018*, the ABS is reshaping its workforce capability to ensure we have the right people with the right skills to transform, while continuing to deliver high quality official statistics.

Training statistics from 2006–07 to 2016–17 are presented in Table 6.7.

Key achievements in 2016–17

The ABS's external learning management system, *Statistical Learning*, was launched. This platform supports external stakeholders by allowing access to ABS statistical learning resources. This initiative is designed to help build statistical capability across the Public Service. At 30 June 2017, 166 external staff were using this platform, with access to 32 e-learning modules.

The *ABS Mentoring Program* was launched, providing a platform to establish mentoring relationships and provide mentors and mentees with supporting resources. At 30 June 2017 there were 312 staff participating in this program.

The ABS welcomed 46 graduates to the *Graduate Development Program*. This program supports graduates to quickly build workforce capability and has successfully integrated a Senior Executive Service shadowing element to help graduates broaden their understanding of the ABS business.

A practical workshop *Leading Transformation: Coaching for High Performance* was developed and implemented, equipping over 350 Executive Level staff to support cultural transformation through developing a coaching culture.

The *Statistical Business Transformation Program – Learning, Development and Knowledge Management Strategy* was devised. This outlines the organisation's approach to reskilling our workforce as part of the ABS transformation program.

The *Analytical Skills Foundation Pathway* was implemented. This is a fully blended program including videos, e-learning modules and on-the-job development guides. At 30 June 2017, 386 staff were participating in this program.

The *Developing Self* learning tool was launched to support staff at all levels to focus on continual self-improvement.

Seven tertiary level capability development opportunities in subjects that are critical to supporting ABS transformation aspirations became accessible. Eighty staff from eight office locations have participated.

ABS was awarded the LearnX 2016 Best New Technology Implementation for *CapabilityPlus*, the ABS's internal Learning Management System. This system allowed a temporary scale-up of 30,000 users to cater for the learning needs of the Census field staff.

Table 6.7: ABS employee training days ^(a)

Total ABS operative staff ^(b)	Attendance days	Average training days
2006–07	3065	13491 ^(c)
2007–08	2733	9907
2008–09	2489	6179
2009–10	2593	7397
2010–11 ^(d)	3416	12054
2011–12	3213	15541
2012–13	2919 ^(e)	7547 ^(f)
2013–14	2723 ^(e)	5935
2014–15	2750 ^(e)	2970 ^(g)
2015–16 ^(d)	3446	7689
2016–17	2716	4730 ⁽ⁱ⁾

(a) Excludes on the job and Census Data Processing (DPC) training.

(b) Comprises full-time and part-time operative staff headcount.

(c) Figures revised down since first published.

(d) Increase due to Census Management Unit operations.

(e) Minor correction to original published numbers.

(f) Decrease partly due to move to e-learning approaches.

(g) Significant decrease in face-to-face sessions with more emphasis on e-learning/blended learning approaches.

(h) Rise in average training days due to significant graduate intake, mandatory e-learning modules for new recruits and new telework arrangements, availability of new e-learning modules for self-directed learning, and focus on skills for transformation such as Agile Methodology and EL1 orientation.

(i) A reduction from previous year due to lower staffing levels, limited face-to-face delivery and use of e-learning.

Recruitment

The efficiency and effectiveness of the ABS depends on attracting and retaining the right people.

Key achievements in 2016–17

In 2016–17 ABS recruitment processes included recruitment of:

- over 38,000 field staff for the 2016 Census of Population and Housing
- over 700 non-ongoing staff in Canberra and South Dandenong to process Census data and a further 100 for the Census Help Line in Geelong
- seven SES
- 46 graduates, who commenced the formal Graduate Development Program in February 2017
- nearly 100 ongoing and non-ongoing Field Interviewers across Australia.

Initiatives in recruitment practices have included increased use of video interviewing to improve timeliness and help assess candidate suitability. The ABS is also one of the seven participating agencies in the APS Operation Free Range trial, which aims to identify and address barriers to mobility across the APS.



Workplace health and safety

The ABS is committed to fostering a proactive and collaborative approach to the management of work health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace. Specialist teams of work health and safety (WHS) advisors and rehabilitation specialists focus on wellbeing at work, preventing injury and illness, early intervention if injury or illness occurs, and rehabilitation and return to work programs.

In 2016–17, the ABS completed the final year of its three-year Work Health and Safety and Rehabilitation Management System Strategy (2014–17), focusing on a strong safety culture, accountable leadership, effective management of hazards, good communication and continuous improvement.

The newly formed ABS People Committee is the senior executive forum with responsibility for oversight of the ABS WHS and Rehabilitation Management Systems.

Key achievements in 2016–17

Measures taken to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of employees during 2016–17 included:

- designing and implementing safe work practices to make the 2016 Census the safest Census ever. Use of technology to deliver training, report hazards and enhance supervision and communication while in the field was a key focus area
- wellbeing initiatives to support ABS staff during the peak Census period, including walking challenges, access to Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counselling, wellbeing checks and seminars related to managing self and teams in times of stress, and specific support and counselling activities to assist staff after the tragic death of a popular Director
- release of three mental health e-learning modules for staff and managers, focusing on mental health awareness, managing risks to mental health and support for staff with mental health conditions
- implementation of activity based working arrangements in the ABS's Sydney office to extend flexible working to six of nine ABS offices, with all ABS staff able to access teleworking
- support for a range of health and safety initiatives including Mental Health Week, RUOK Day, World Day for Safety and Health at Work, Safe Work Month, and National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence
- delivery of a flu vaccination program to 1,173 office-based staff.

Consultation and communication

The ABS has one national, one field-based and ten site-based Health and Safety Committees. Health and Safety Committees are required to meet at least once every three months. In 2016–17, 94% of ABS Health and Safety Committee meetings were held every three months.

Revised and new WHS policies and guidelines on the following topics were released in 2016–17, following consultation with staff and their representatives:

- WHS risk management
- WHS communication and consultation
- Work Groups and Health and Safety Representatives
- Health and Safety Committees
- communicating and consulting with other duty holders
- incident reporting and notification
- psychological health

- rehabilitation management
- fitness for duty
- fatigue management
- hazardous manual tasks and ergonomics
- hand-held devices
- remote or isolated work
- personal protective equipment
- preventing slips, trips and falls.

Training

WHS modules are available to all staff via the ABS e-learning system. In 2016–17:

- 196 staff completed the Introduction to WHS module
- 46 staff completed the WHS Risk Management module.

In the ABS there are a number of specific WHS roles filled by trained staff:

- First Aid Officers must complete an accredited first aid training course initially and attend a refresher course every 12 months. 63 staff undertook first aid training in 2016–17.
- Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) have the option of completing a five-day training course upon commencement in the role, and the option of attending a one-day refresher course every 12 months. 24 staff undertook HSR training in 2016–17.
- Wardens are required to attend skills retention training every six months. In addition, wardens are required to participate in a trial evacuation at least once annually. 156 staff undertook fire warden training in 2016–17.

Provisional Improvement Notices

No Provisional Improvement Notices (PINs) were issued to the ABS during 2016–17.

Comcare investigations and inspections

In 2016–17, Comcare conducted three inspections of reported incidents. One contravention of the primary duty of care requirement and one contravention of the worker's own duty of care requirement of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* were found.

No notices were issued by Comcare under Part 10 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* during 2016–17.

The ABS has worked collaboratively with Comcare on implementing improved practices to reduce the risk of workplace injury and to reduce workers' compensation claim numbers and duration.

Comcare premium

The ABS Comcare premium rate for 2016–17 was 2.20% of total salary (excluding GST).

Table 6.8: Comcare workers' compensation premium rate

	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
ABS premium rate	2.07	2.46	2.21	2.20
Overall scheme premium rate	1.65	1.93	1.85	1.72



Incidents and investigations

Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, the ABS is required to report all 'notifiable incidents' which arise from undertaking the business of the ABS. Notifiable incidents include the death of a person, serious injury or illness, or a dangerous incident. During 2016–17, there were 31 notifiable incidents (16 serious injuries or illnesses and 15 dangerous incidents).

Workplace injuries and illnesses

The top three mechanisms of incident resulting in injury or illness reported in the ABS during 2016–17 were falls, trips and slips, being hit by moving objects and mental stress. In addition, there were 841 safety incidents reported that resulted in no injury, or damage to property only.

Figure 6.2: Number of injuries and illnesses reported by mechanism of incident, 2015–16 and 2016–17 – ABS operations (excluding Census)

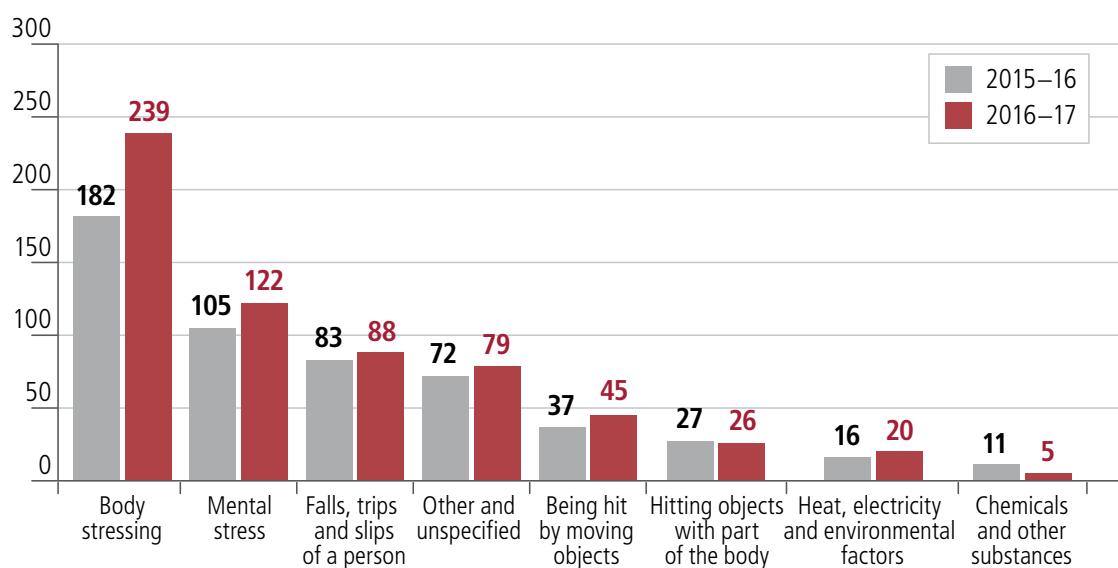
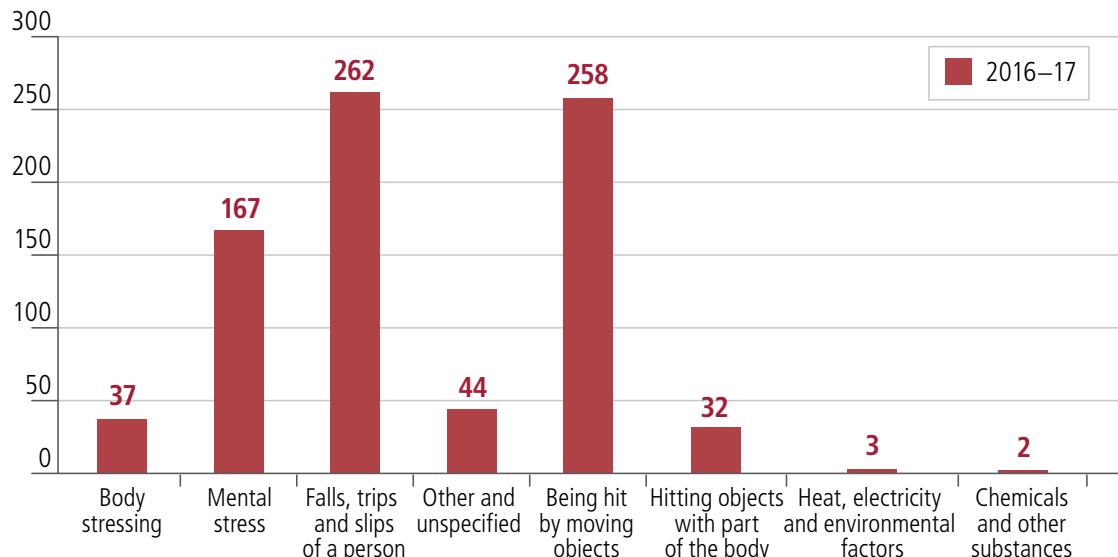


Figure 6.3: Number of injuries and illnesses reported by mechanism of incident, 2016–17 – 2016 Census only



Note: Data for 2015–16 is not included as a comparison as the majority of injuries/illnesses relating to Census occurred in 2016–17.

Rehabilitation and workers' compensation

The ABS is committed to minimising the impact of injury, illness and disease in employees through the key strategies of early intervention and proactive case management.

The ABS had 32 claims for workers' compensation accepted by Comcare with a date of injury occurring during the 2016–17 financial year. An additional 12 compensation claims were submitted by ABS employees and subsequently disallowed by Comcare.

Included in the 32 claims were 19 accepted claims for workers' compensation which were related to the 2016 Census. This was a 79% reduction in accepted claims from the previous Census.

Table 6.9: Accepted ABS compensable claims by date of injury, 2013–14 to 2016–17^(a)

Accepted claims	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	Total
ABS Office-based	29	14	10	8	61
ABS Interviewers	10	10	5	6	31
Census	0	4	1	18	23
Total	39	28	16	32	115

(a) When comparing recent periods with previous years' data it should be noted that the data on the current period is subject to the late submission of claims.

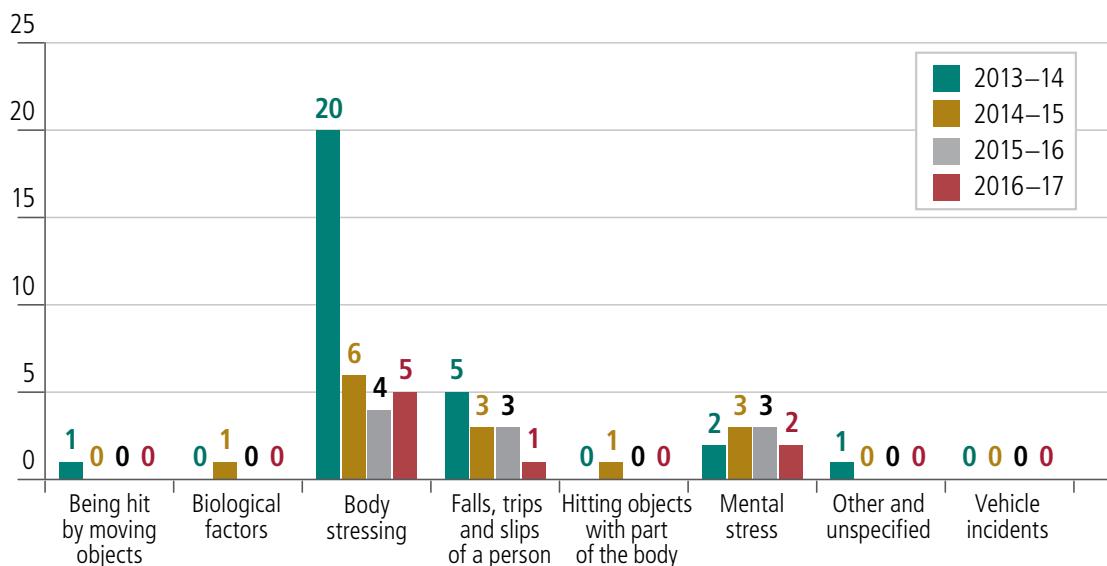
The ABS Rehabilitation Management System (RMS) was audited in the 2016–17 financial year by the insurer, Comcare, and the ABS achieved a 77% conformance rating. This conformance compares with an earlier independent audit in June 2016 commissioned by the ABS where the ABS achieved 44% conformance using the same Comcare audit framework. The earlier audit outcome and the recent Comcare audit have assisted the ABS to develop a robust Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address areas of non-conformance and improve the RMS to support the rehabilitation and return to work of ill or injured employees.

The invoiced ABS premium costs for 2017–18 are \$4,453,050 (excluding GST) compared to \$7,498,694 for 2016–17.

Figures 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 show the number of accepted claims by mechanism of incident. Current priorities include addressing long term and high-cost claims in partnership with Comcare, and working towards an active case management approach through staff education and early intervention initiatives.

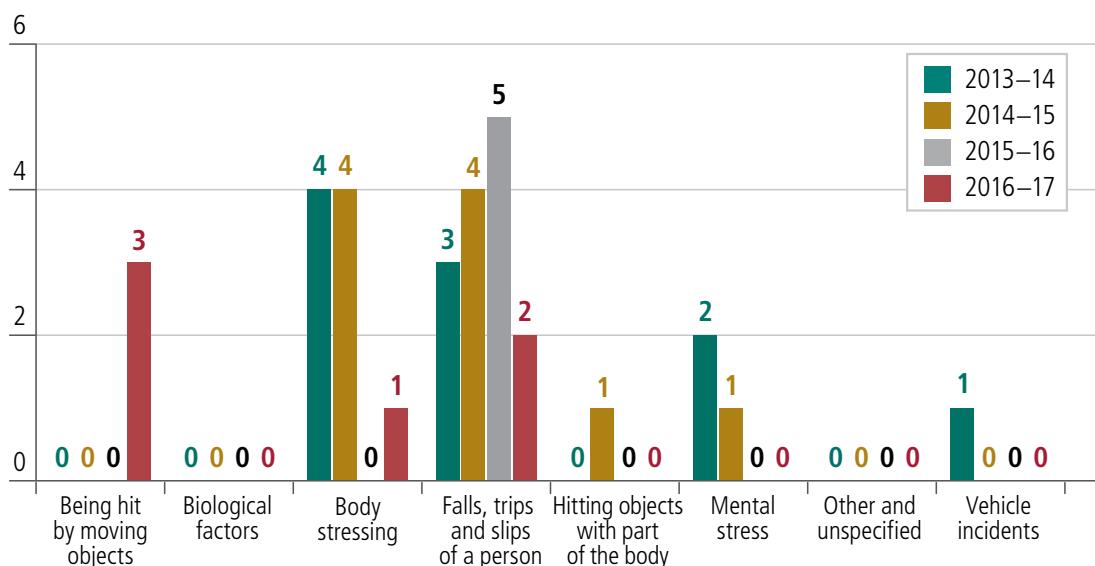


Figure 6.4: Accepted ABS office-based claims by mechanism of incident 2013–14 to 2016–17^{(a)(b)}



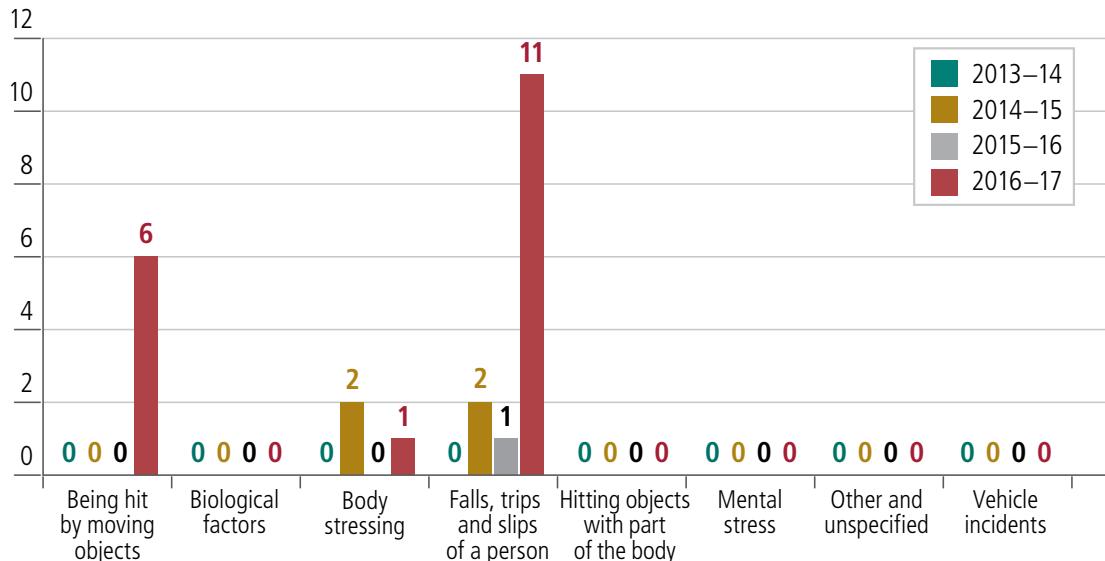
(a) When comparing recent periods with previous years' data it should be noted that the data on the current period is subject to the late submission of claims.
(b) The reduction in body stressing claims since 2013–14 has been due to proactive prevention and improved management practices.

Figure 6.5: Accepted ABS Interviewer claims by mechanism of incident 2013–14 to 2016–17^(a)



(a) When comparing recent periods with previous years' data it should be noted that the data on the current period is subject to the late submission of claims.

Figure 6.6: Census accepted claims by mechanism of incident 2013–14 to 2016–17



Attendance management

In 2016–17, the average number of days of unscheduled absence per full-time equivalent (FTE) was 11.8 days (Table 6.10). This is less than the Australian Government (Large Agency) median over the previous two years (12.5 days per FTE in 2015–16 and 12.4 days per FTE in 2014–15).

Table 6.10: Unscheduled absence: days per FTE^{(a)(b)}

	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17
ABS	12.4	12.1 ^(c)	11.8
Australian Government (Large Agency) median	12.4	12.5	n/a ^(d)

(a) Excludes interviewers, non-ongoing Census Data Processing Centre staff, and Census field staff.

(b) Totals do not include workers compensation due to a change in APSC reporting in the 2014–15 year. Figures may not match those contained in previous ABS reports as a result.

(c) Includes leave applications processed after publication of the 2015–16 ABS Annual Report.

(d) The Australian Government (Large Agency) median for 2016–17 was not available at the time of preparing this report.

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) use rate for ABS office-based staff during 2016–17 was 10.2% compared with 9.1% in 2015–16, consistent with increased efforts to promote EAP support during a challenging year. The EAP use rate for ABS interviewer staff was 8.2% in 2016–17, compared with 5.1% in 2015–16. There were 20 instances of usage of the ABS psychological counselling service by Census field officers in 2016–17.



Consultation in the ABS

The ABS is committed to effective workplace relations that value communication, cooperation and effective consultation with employees and their chosen representatives, including union representatives, about matters that affect their workplace.

The ABS consultative framework comprises the following elements:

- line managers
- consultative forums
- the National Forum
- employee representatives.

The National Forum generally meets twice a year to communicate and consult on significant national issues affecting the ABS workplace.

An extraordinary meeting of the National Forum was held in December 2016 to discuss the ABS State of the Service Census results. The National Forum also met in March 2017 to discuss new learning resources, workplace flexibility, diversity and transformation.

The ABS also increased efforts on consultation and engagement activities across line management during the year, and through focus groups and national consultation worked on local level changes and national activities such as the development of a 360-degree feedback tool.

Employment arrangements

The ABS has a number of industrial instruments in place to cover the employment arrangements for various ABS workforces. The instruments that apply to employees engaged under the *Public Service Act 1999* are:

- the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Enterprise Agreement 2016* which covers all ABS employees employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*, except Senior Executive Service employees
- individual Determinations under section 24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999* which cover Senior Executive Service employees.

The instruments that apply to employees engaged under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* in accordance with the *Census and Statistics Regulation 2016* are:

- the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Interviewers Enterprise Agreement 2017* which covers field-based ABS Interviewers
- a collective Determination under s.16(7) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* which covers Census field employees undertaking the 2016 Census of Population and Housing.

Details of the number of employees covered by an Enterprise Agreement, Individual Flexibility Arrangement, a Determination under s. 24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999* or a Determination under s. 16(7) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* as at 30 June 2017 are as follows:

- ABS employees covered by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Enterprise Agreement 2016*: 2,831
- ABS employees covered by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Interviewers Enterprise Agreement 2017*: 418
- Individual Flexibility Arrangements made under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Enterprise Agreement 2016*: 10

- SES employees covered by s. 24(1) Determination: 45
- Employees covered by s. 16(7) Determination: 1,322.^(a)

(a) All Field staff had concluded their work on the 2016 Census at 30 June 2017.

ABS salary system

Salary arrangements

The *ABS Enterprise Agreement 2016* outlines the salary arrangements for non-SES ABS employees employed under the *Public Service Act 1999* for the period of 3 June 2016 to 2 June 2019. A general salary increase of 2% was effective from 3 June 2017. Table 6.11 shows the salary ranges for ABS employees.

Table 6.11: Salary ranges by classification as at 30 June 2017

Classification	Minimum (\$)	Maximum (\$)
Australian Public Service (APS) level		
APS1	42,438	48,348
APS2	48,529	54,720
APS3	55,285	62,320
APS4	62,372	70,156
APS5	70,160	78,808
APS6	78,816	89,008
Executive Officer (EL) level		
EL1	96,832	111,936
EL2	120,886	145,430
Senior Executive Service (SES) level		
SES Band 1	163,200	198,900
SES Band 2	204,000	249,900
SES Band 3	255,000	N/A ^(a)

(a) Not applicable (as there is not a maximum level for this classification).

Recognition

The ABS takes great pride in its accomplishments and in staff contributions to these successes. To keep recognition of achievements contemporary, the ABS implemented a new recognition scheme in 2017, called Excellence Awards, which recognises staff going above and beyond their normal work. The scheme is an open, transparent process which is applied consistently across the ABS. The scheme identifies opportunities to acknowledge excellence in people management, client management, cultural change and leadership, innovation and dealing with exceptional circumstances. The awards are run quarterly to ensure staff are regularly engaged in the process and outcomes are regularly communicated to all staff.

Managers are also encouraged to consider more immediate forms of recognition, such as development opportunities, in addition to the formal recognition program. This may take the form of shadowing senior managers for short periods of time, working on high priority work to gain cross-organisational experience or acknowledging employees and their contributions at regular meetings. Both the Excellence Awards and manager recognition are non-salary benefit related recognition.

The two other award opportunities in the ABS are the Australian Statistician's Awards and the Long Service Awards. These are also non-salary benefits awards.

The Australian Statistician's Awards are held in conjunction with Australia Day Awards each year. The event celebrates Australia Day Achievement Medallion recipients on behalf of the National Australia Day Council, as well as those staff who have made exceptional contributions to the ABS in the past year. The Australian Statistician's Awards provide an opportunity to recognise and reward ABS employees who have demonstrated outstanding contributions and leadership in people, statistics, innovation or service provision. All ABS staff are eligible for this award. Australia Day Medallions provide an opportunity to recognise and reward ABS employees who have demonstrated outstanding contributions in either representing Australia, or a state or territory, in a sporting, cultural, community, charitable, arts or similar endeavour, or any member of staff who has made a professional contribution in the external environment as an ABS officer. All ABS staff are eligible for this award.

In 2017, ten staff members received Australian Statistician's Awards, recognising their leadership, engagement and innovation. Three staff were awarded Australia Day Achievement Medallions in recognition of representation at the state and national levels in blind cricket, as well as management contributions of ACT championship sporting teams.

Long Service Awards were expanded this year to include staff who have served as part of the Australian Public Service, not just the ABS, for 20 or 30 years. The Long Service Awards acknowledge the contribution and commitment to both the APS and the ABS over the years. This year, there were 90 recipients of the 30 year Long Service Awards, and 163 recipients of the 20 year Long Service Awards.

The total expenditure on these awards for 2016–17 was \$35,581. This included catering, commemorative items (i.e. pins/medallions) and travel costs.



Australia Day Awards recipients with the Australian Statistician – January 2017

Performance management in the ABS

The ABS is committed to being a high performing public agency, promoting a people-oriented culture through focus on leadership, communication, innovation and engagement.

Where there are concerns about employee performance, ABS managers work with their employees by implementing an informal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). ABS initiated eight PIPs for ongoing office-based staff during 2016–17. Where an employee's performance has not improved through a PIP, a formal underperformance process commences. Four employees were the subject of formal processes to manage underperformance. This resulted in a range of outcomes including employees meeting the expected level of performance, having their classification reduced or resigning prior to a final decision to terminate their employment. In addition, the contracts of three non-ongoing employees were terminated due to underperformance.

During 2016–17 ABS completed two investigations into suspected breaches of the APS Code of Conduct by ABS employees. None involved privacy breaches. One employee resigned from APS employment following a preliminary sanction decision of termination of employment and the other employee received a sanction other than termination of employment.

Ecological sustainability

Introduction

During 2016–17, the ABS remained committed to the principles of ecological sustainable development as outlined in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act).

In accordance with the EPBC Act, the ABS has two key roles relating to ecologically sustainable development. The first is the ABS's responsibility for providing statistics on the environment and environmental issues to enable informed decision-making. The second is the impact of the ABS's operations on the environment and the action being taken by the ABS to minimise that impact.

In accordance with sub-section 516A (6), of the EPBC Act, the ABS's performance is outlined below.

516A (6) (a) How do the activities of the organisation, and the administration of legislation by the organisation, accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development?

The ABS Environmental Policy Statement articulates our commitment to the identification and pursuit of effective environmental practices. In accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development, the ABS pursues environmentally positive practices by:

- seeking to minimise adverse environmental impacts from its operations
- complying with relevant Commonwealth and territory environment legislation and the Australian Government's environmental policies and initiatives
- working towards continuously improving our environmental performance.

In 2012–13, the ABS implemented an Environmental Management System (EMS) at its largest site in Canberra, which set the ongoing environmental considerations for the ABS:

- targeting reductions in energy usage and the generation of waste
- complying with relevant Commonwealth and territory environment legislation and the Australian Government's environmental policies and initiatives
- encouraging and promoting environmentally sound procurement practices in compliance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules
- providing for an environmentally sound workplace and implementing environmentally sound work practices
- monitoring our energy performance and green lease commitments and implementing processes of continuous improvement
- supporting and promoting an environmentally responsible culture.

516A (6) (b) How do the outcomes specified in a relevant Appropriations Act contribute to ecologically sustainable development?

The ABS receives appropriation for the purpose of producing statistics that inform decision-making on a wide range of social and economic matters.



The ABS works closely with the community and governments to further build information on environmental statistics, to complement the more established information bases on population, society and the economy. The focus of this development work is the integration of environmental statistics with Australia's economic and social statistics.

For more information on ABS statistical publications and developments, please refer to the ABS website www.abs.gov.au for:

- Agriculture
- Rural and Regional Statistics
- Environment
- Energy
- Water
- Land
- Ecosystems.

516A (6) (c) What is the effect of the organisation's activities on the environment?

ABS's activities are predominately office-based and have the potential to affect the environment through consumption of energy and water, waste production and waste sent to landfill. The ABS seeks to improve its performance by measuring and managing:

- energy consumption and greenhouse gas pollution across its offices
- paper consumption
- carbon emissions in transportation
- water usage
- waste sent to landfill, whilst increasing recycling of packaging and waste
- the procurement of environmentally friendly products.

Opportunities for continuous improvement are sought. Lease negotiations in Canberra, Tasmania and Adelaide in 2016–17 have incorporated Green Lease Schedules which will be used to build a collaborative approach to managing environmental impacts of the ABS and the buildings it occupies.

516A (6) (d) What measures are taken by the organisation to minimise the impact of its activities on the environment?

The ABS has sought to minimise its impact on the environment through a number of measures.

Targeting reductions in energy usage and the generation of waste

Activity based work fit-outs are being introduced across all ABS offices to decrease office footprints by an additional 20%. In 2016–17, Perth, Sydney and Melbourne fit-outs were delivered, meaning six of the nine ABS offices have been completed. This has reduced the environmental impact of fit-out, furniture production, and the necessary operational services, particularly electricity.

Energy consumption and waste in fit-outs have been reduced where possible by including energy efficient LED lights and smart lighting technologies in all tenanted areas. New office fit-outs will include T5 lighting systems, incorporating daylight harvesting, to reduce consumption nationally.

Furniture and equipment reuse has been maximised for all property fit-out projects and where this is not possible, recyclable materials from damaged and non-resalable furniture have been harvested.

Demand for paper and hard copies is reducing. ABS publications are available on the ABS website, and computer-assisted interviewing is used in place of paper forms where possible.

The impact of travel on the environment is being reduced. Improvements in video conferencing equipment and software, and increasing the number of video conferencing facilities, support virtual teams across offices and reduce the requirement to travel.

Recycling services are provided to all office-based staff, including:

- recycling paper, bottles, aluminium cans, steel cans, plastic and cardboard products in all offices
- recycling mobile phones, batteries, polystyrene in all sites where contractor packaging removal was not part of the contracts or service agreements
- organic recycling of kitchen waste at ABS House Canberra.

Complying with relevant Commonwealth and territory environment legislation and the Australian Government's environmental policies and initiatives

The ABS has maintained its Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Energy Management Plan initiatives, developed in accordance with the ICT Sustainability Plan 2010–2015, which included for 2016–17:

- relocation of the in-house data centre to an off-site commercial data centre with more efficient infrastructure
- continually refreshing programs for desktops, servers and storage, utilising the latest available technology
- ongoing replacement of the desktop fleet with tablets which should result in a reduction in power consumption of approximately 50% across the fleet
- increased server virtualisation
- utilising 'Print on Demand' functionality on all printers and multi-functional devices (MFDs)
- utilising duplex printing and copying
- utilising reduced standby timeout period on MFDs from 90 to 60 minutes
- promoting use of 100% recycled content copy paper.

Prior to its relocation off-site in early 2017, the Central Office data centre environmental performance measures included:

- high level metering of data centre (located in Central Office) and communications equipment energy consumption
- utilising an intelligent management system for data centre air-conditioners to increase efficiency
- utilising variable speed drives in data centre condenser water pumps and cooling fans for increased efficiency
- utilising an intelligent server management system to maximise energy efficiencies.



Encouraging and promoting environmentally sound procurement practices in compliance with Commonwealth Procurement Rules

Procurement of 10% green energy as part of the whole-of-government energy contract for ABS House and 10% green energy for the Sydney, Melbourne, Geelong, Dandenong and Adelaide offices continued.

Environmental and whole-of-life-cycle clauses are included as part of the tender and evaluation process in most procurement activities.

Vehicles with 10.5 GVG rating, in accordance with the Green Vehicle Guide, are leased.

100% recycled paper is procured for general office use.

Providing an environmentally sound workplace and implement environmentally sound work practices

Progressive introduction of flexible working arrangements has reduced the need for staff to work at ABS offices full-time. This has further reduced staff travel to and from offices, decreased the office footprint by an additional 20% and reduced associated office resources use, such as paper and furniture.

A knowledge framework has been implemented, incorporating digital recordkeeping rather than paper records, with automatic recordkeeping facilities for ABS workgroup databases.

Environmental efficiency measures have been incorporated into the market testing process for new leases with the integration of green lease schedules in each new tenancy.

Building management systems control lighting and reduce energy use.

Re-manufactured and recycled cartridges for photocopiers, faxes and printers are used wherever possible, and used printer cartridges are recycled.

White goods with heavily weighted energy ratings are purchased.

Monitoring our energy performance and green lease commitments, and implementing processes of continuous improvement

The ABS monitors its:

- office energy consumption for all sites
- Canberra office waste, including organic waste
- Canberra office water consumption
- national staff numbers
- national paper consumption
- national fleet operations.

Supporting and promoting an environmentally responsible culture

An environmentally responsible culture is fostered by:

- promoting, participating in and celebrating environmental and energy programs such as Earth Hour
- supporting local Green Teams to raise environmental awareness and develop local initiatives.



SECTION FOUR

FINANCIAL REPORTING



Chapter 7

Resource statements



Entity Resource Statement 2016–17

	Actual available appropriation for 2016–2017 \$'000	Payments made 2016–2017 \$'000	Balance remaining 2016–2017 \$'000
	(a)	(b)	(a) – (b)
Ordinary Annual Services¹			
Departmental appropriation ²	723,153	642,716	80,437
Total	723,153	642,716	80,437
Total ordinary annual services A	723,153	642,716	80,437
Other services³			
Departmental non-operating			
Equity injections	48,867	30,407	18,460
Total	48,867	30,407	18,460
Total other services B	48,867	30,407	18,460
Total resourcing and payments A+B	772,020	673,123	98,897

1. *Appropriation Act (No.1) 2016–17.* This may also include prior year departmental appropriation and section 74 retained revenue receipts.
2. Includes an amount of \$20.402 million in 2016–17 for the departmental capital budget. For accounting purposes, this amount has been designated as 'contributions by owners'.
3. *Appropriation Act (No.2) 2016–17.* This may also include prior year equity injections.



Expenses for Outcome 1

Outcome 1: Informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community by leading the collection, analysis and provision of high quality, objective and relevant statistical information	Budget*	Actual Expenses	Variation
	2016–17 \$'000	2016–17 \$'000	2016–17 \$'000
	(a)	(b)	(a) – (b)
Program 1.1: Australian Bureau of Statistics			
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriation ¹	561,116	584,285	(23,169) ²
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year	35,940	37,221	(1,281)
Total for Program 1.1	597,056	621,506	(24,450)
Total expenses for Outcome 1	597,056	621,506	(24,450)
		2015–16	2016–17
Average staffing level (number)		2,888	2,896

* Full year budget, including any subsequent adjustment made to the 2016–17 budget at Additional Estimates.

1. Departmental appropriation combines ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act No.1) and retained revenue receipts under section 74 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.
2. The variation is due to an increase in the Census expenditure as a result of the Census outage.

Compliance with PGPA Act and PGPA Rule

Sections 17AG and 17BE of the PGPA Rule require that Commonwealth entities' annual reports must include a statement of any significant issues or instances of non-compliance in relation to the finance law. Entities must also notify the responsible Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the PGPA Act during the reporting period and outline the actions taken to remedy the non-compliance. As the Finance Minister has responsibility for the finance law, Accountable Authorities should also provide a copy of their notifications of significant non-compliance with the finance law to the Finance Minister.

The ABS has not identified any instances of significant or systemic non-compliance in 2016–17.



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Minister for Small Business

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 2017:

- (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*; and
- (b) present fairly the financial position of the Australian Bureau of Statistics as at 30 June 2017 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

The financial statements of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which I have audited, comprise the following statements as at 30 June 2017 and for the year then ended:

- Statement by the Accountable Authority and Chief Finance Officer;
- Statement of Comprehensive Income;
- Statement of Financial Position;
- Statement of Changes in Equity;
- Cash Flow Statement;
- Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income;
- Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities;
- Administered Reconciliation Schedule;
- Administered Cash Flow Statement; and
- Notes to the financial statements

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Australian Bureau of Statistics in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements for financial statement audits conducted by the Auditor-General and his delegates. These include the relevant independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* to the extent that they are not in conflict with the *Auditor-General Act 1997* (the Code). I have also fulfilled my other responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Accountable Authority's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

As the Accountable Authority of the Australian Bureau of Statistics the Australian Statistician is responsible under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* for the preparation and fair presentation of annual financial statements that comply with Australian Accounting Standards and the rules made under that Act. The Australian Statistician is also responsible for such internal control as the Australian Statistician determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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19 National Circuit BARTON ACT
Phone (02) 6203 7300 Fax (02) 6203 7777

In preparing the financial statements, the Australian Statistician is responsible for assessing the Australian Bureau of Statistics' ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing matters related to going concern as applicable and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Australian Statistician either intends to liquidate the entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control;
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Accountable Authority;
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Accountable Authority's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern; and
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Australian National Audit Office



Jocelyn Ashford
Senior Executive Director
Delegate of the Auditor-General
Canberra
18 August 2017

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**Australian Bureau of Statistics
STATEMENT BY THE ACCOUNTABLE AUTHORITY AND CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 comply with subsection 42(2) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act), and are based on properly maintained financial records as per subsection 41(2) of the PGPA Act.

In our opinion, at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Australian Bureau of Statistics will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Signed

David W. Kalisch
Australian Statistician
18 August 2017

Signed

Lily Viertmann
Chief Finance Officer
18 August 2017

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Statement of Comprehensive Income
for the period ended 30 June 2017

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget 2017 \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES				
Expenses				
Employee benefits	1.1A	407,761	327,079	421,488
Suppliers	1.1B	175,723	125,233	139,848
Depreciation and amortisation	2.2A	34,424	30,889	35,720
Finance costs	2.4A	73	183	-
Write-down and impairment of assets	1.1C	3,525	230	-
Total expenses		621,506	483,614	597,056
Own-Source Income				
Own-source revenue				
Sale of goods and rendering of services	1.2A	44,357	35,823	38,000
Other revenue	1.2B	2,079	3,447	2,753
Total own-source revenue		46,436	39,270	40,753
Gains				
Other gains	1.2C	37,249	237	220
Total gains		37,249	237	220
Total own-source income		83,685	39,507	40,973
Net cost of services		(537,821)	(444,107)	(556,083)
Revenue from Government		520,341	407,509	520,363
Deficit attributable to the Australian Government		(17,480)	(36,598)	(35,720)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to net cost of services				
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		-	58	-
Total other comprehensive income		-	58	-
Total comprehensive loss attributable to the Australian Government		(17,480)	(36,540)	(35,720)

Accounting Policy

Revenue from Government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as Revenue from Government when the ABS gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Appropriations receivables are recognised at their nominal amounts. Departmental capital budgets are accounted for as contributions by owners.

Revenue from Government received by the ABS is inclusive of the cyclical appropriation related to the five yearly Census of Population and Housing.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
Refer to Overview for explanations of major variances between budgeted and actual amounts.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Statement of Financial Position
as at 30 June 2017**

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget 2017 \$'000
ASSETS				
Financial assets				
Cash and cash equivalents		3,763	9,684	2,079
Trade and other receivables	2.1A	103,048	63,260	53,920
Total financial assets		106,811	72,944	55,999
Non-financial assets				
Leasehold improvements	2.2A	11,780	20,219	-
Plant and equipment	2.2A	27,358	26,176	67,990
Intangibles	2.2A	91,323	76,848	86,133
Prepayments		11,465	10,250	8,604
Total non-financial assets		141,926	133,493	162,727
Total assets		248,737	206,437	218,726
LIABILITIES				
Payables				
Suppliers	2.3A	21,686	31,617	13,000
Other payables	2.3B	55,647	39,663	49,158
Total payables		77,333	71,280	62,158
Provisions				
Employee leave		90,443	93,076	83,107
Other	2.4A	593	6,120	6,571
Total provisions		91,036	99,196	89,678
Total liabilities		168,369	170,476	151,836
Net assets		80,368	35,961	66,890
EQUITY				
Contributed equity		271,847	209,826	271,934
Reserves		23,980	23,980	23,922
Accumulated deficit		(215,459)	(197,845)	(228,966)
Total equity		80,368	35,961	66,890

Accounting Policy

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Cash and cash equivalents include:

- a) cash on hand; and
- b) deposits on demand in bank accounts with an original maturity of 3 months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.

Employee leave

Refer to Accounting Policy Note 1.1A Employee Benefits for detail.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Refer to Overview for explanations of major variances between budgeted and actual amounts.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Statement of Changes in Equity
for the period ended 30 June 2017

	Retained earnings		Asset revaluation reserves		Contributed equity		Total equity	
	Original Budget	Original Budget	Original Budget	Original Budget	Original Budget	Original Budget	\$'000	\$'000
2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2017	2016
\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Opening balance	(197,845)	(161,247)	(193,246)	23,980	23,922	209,826	156,377	209,826
Balance carried forward from previous period								19,052
Prior year adjustments	(134)	-	-	-	-	-	(134)	-
Adjusted opening balance	(197,979)	(161,247)	(193,246)	23,980	23,922	209,826	156,377	209,826
Comprehensive income								
Surplus/(Deficit) for the period	(17,480)	(36,598)	(35,720)	-	-	-	-	(36,598)
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-	58	-	-	-	58
Total comprehensive income	(17,480)	(36,598)	(35,720)	-	58	-	-	(17,480)
 Transactions with owners								
Contributions to owners								
Returns of capital ¹	-	-	-	-	-	(87)	-	(87)
Contributions by owners								
Equity injection - Appropriations	-	-	-	-	41,706	32,699	41,706	32,699
Departmental capital budget	-	-	-	-	20,402	20,750	20,402	20,750
Total transactions with owners	-	-	-	-	62,021	53,449	62,108	53,449
Closing balance as at 30 June	(215,459)	(197,845)	(228,966)	23,980	23,980	271,847	209,826	271,934
							80,368	80,368

1. \$87,000 quarantined from Appropriation Act No 2 2013-14 in 2016 was returned to the Government in 2017.

Accounting Policy

Equity injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions) and Departmental Capital Budgets (DCBs) are recognised directly in contributed equity in that year.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
Refer to Overview for explanations of major variances between budgeted and actual amounts.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Cash Flow Statement
for the period ended 30 June 2017**

	Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original Budget 2017 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Appropriations		575,263	454,329	524,863
Sales of goods and rendering of services		51,513	41,095	38,000
Net GST received		17,254	12,048	3,325
Other		36,866	1,718	2,753
Total cash received		680,896	509,190	568,941
Cash used				
Employees		409,452	326,384	421,488
Suppliers		204,231	124,553	143,053
Section 74 receipts transferred to OPA		77,800	47,691	-
Total cash used		691,483	498,628	564,541
Net cash from / (used by) operating activities		(10,587)	10,562	4,400
INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		191	64	100
Total cash received		191	64	100
Cash used				
Purchase of leasehold improvements		1,628	11,868	-
Purchase of plant and equipment		7,800	16,202	66,608
Purchase of intangibles		35,485	23,315	-
Total cash used		44,913	51,385	66,608
Net cash (used by) investing activities		(44,722)	(51,321)	(66,508)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Cash received				
Contributed equity		30,407	25,538	62,108
Departmental capital budget		18,981	22,826	-
Total cash received		49,388	48,364	62,108
Net cash from financing activities		49,388	48,364	62,108
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held				
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		(5,921)	7,605	-
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		9,684	2,079	2,079
		3,763	9,684	2,079

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
Refer to Overview for explanations of major variances between budgeted and actual amounts.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income
for the period ended 30 June 2017

Notes	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000	Original
			Budget 2017 \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES			
Income			
Revenue			
Non-taxation revenue			
Fines	-	2	-
Other	-	1	-
Total non-taxation revenue	-	3	-
Total income	-	3	-
Net contribution by services	-	3	-
Surplus	-	3	-
Total comprehensive income	-	3	-

In 2017, the ABS had no administered expenses (2016: Nil).

Accounting Policy

Revenue

All administered revenues are revenues relating to ordinary activities performed by the ABS on behalf of the Australian Government.

Revenue is generated from fines applied by the courts, which is recognised upon payment. Court costs awarded against the ABS, as opposed to fines, are recorded as a departmental expense.

Fines

The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* provides the Australian Statistician with the authority to conduct statistical collections and, when necessary, to direct a person or an organisation to provide statistical information. Where information is not provided, the ABS can impose a fine on the person or organisation. Such fines are reported in the financial statements as administered income.

Other Income

Unidentified receipts returned to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Administered Schedule of Assets and Liabilities
as at 30 June 2017

The ABS had no administered assets or liabilities at 30 June 2017 (2016: Nil).

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Administered Reconciliation Schedule
for the period ended 30 June 2017**

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Opening assets less liabilities as at 1 July	-	-
Net contribution by services		
Income	-	3
Transfers to the Australian Government		
Appropriation transfers to OPA		
Transfers to OPA	(3)	
Closing assets less liabilities as at 30 June	-	-

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Administered Cash Flow Statement
for the period ended 30 June 2017**

	2017 Notes \$'000	2016 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash received		
Fines	-	2
Other	-	1
Total cash received	-	3
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	-	-
Cash to Official Public Account	-	3
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	-	-

Accounting Policy

Administered Cash Transfers to Official Public Account

Revenue collected by the ABS for use by the Government rather than the ABS is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance. These transfers to the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the ABS on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the Schedule of Administered Cash Flows, and in the Administered Reconciliation Schedule.

The above schedule should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Overview

The Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements and are required by section 42 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015* (FRR) for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2015; and
- Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations – Reduced Disclosure Requirements issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values, and are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

Taxation

The ABS is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of GST except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office; and for receivables and payables.

Reporting of Administered Activities

Administered revenues, assets, and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes. There are no administered expenses, liabilities, contingencies or commitments in 2017 or 2016.

Except where otherwise stated below, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards.

Simplification of the Financial Statements

As part of adopting the Tier 2: Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and enhancing the quality of disclosure in the ABS' financial statements, the ABS has reduced the length and complexity of its financial statements by:

- removing information that is irrelevant, immaterial or not mandatory
- removing single line item notes that essentially restate information from the primary statements
- combining notes and tables that provide the same information for different line items
- removing notes that contain duplicate information
- reformatting tabular disclosures where possible to make the disclosure easier to understand and to shorten the financial statements.

These changes have been applied to both the reporting year and the comparative year.

While still complying with Australian Accounting Standards and other requirements, the above provides users with clear and concise financial reports that allow a focus on the key information about the performance, position and cash flows of the ABS. There was no change to the comparative operating result or net assets reported.

Events after the Reporting Period

On 9 August 2017, the Treasurer, under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, has directed the Australian Statistician to request statistical information from all Australians on the electoral roll as to their views on whether or not the law, in relation to same sex marriage, should be changed to allow same sex couples to marry. The ABS has been appropriated an Advance from the Finance Minister of \$122 million to deliver the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey. The ABS has formed a Taskforce to deliver the survey and is expected to publish the results by 15 November 2017. The survey Taskforce includes staff from the Australian Electoral Commission seconded to the ABS under the ABS legislation.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Explanations of Major Variances to Budget

The following table provides high level commentary of major variances between budgeted information for the ABS published in the Treasury's 2016-17 Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS) and the 2016-17 final outcome as presented in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards for the ABS. The Budget is not audited.

As a guide, variances are considered to be 'major' based on the following criteria:

- the variance between budget and actual is greater than 10%; and
- the variance between budget and actual is greater than 2% of the relevant category (Income, Expenses and Equity totals); or
- an item below this threshold but is considered important for the reader's understanding or is relevant to an assessment of the discharge of accountability and to an analysis of performance of an entity.

An explanation for a major variance may not be provided where the item is considered immaterial in the overall context of the financial statements.

Affected line items	Variance to Budget \$'000	Explanations of major variances
Statement of Comprehensive Income		
Employee benefits	(13,727)	The variance is largely due to lower than expected staff recruitment. In addition, higher capitalisation of staff time spent in developing internally generated software had an impact on reducing the salary expense.
Suppliers	35,875	The variance is largely due to an increase in the Census expenditure for contractors, advertising and postage costs as a result of the Census outage.
Write-down and impairment of assets	3,525	The variance is primarily due to the ABS' IT transformation program resulting in legacy systems impairment and write-off of fit-outs.
Sale of goods and rendering of services	6,357	Revenue from the sale of goods and rendering of services was higher than originally budgeted due to increased user funded surveys.
Other revenue	(674)	The variance is primarily due to the ATO's IT services received free of charge which was no longer required once the 2016 Census was completed.
Other gains	37,029	The variance relates to compensatory settlement and negotiated make-good provision for the Canberra office.
Statement of Financial Position		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,684	Cash is drawn down from the Official Public Account for payment on a needs basis. The cash balance varies depending on the timing of debt collection and payments at the reporting date.
Trade and other receivables	49,128	The majority of this balance represents the Appropriations Receivable. The variance is due to appropriations that were not drawn down as at the reporting date.
Leasehold improvements / Plant and equipment	(28,852)	Leasehold improvements is budgeted as part of the Plant and equipment class. The variance is primarily due to the delay in expenditure of the Canberra office fitout project.
Prepayments	2,861	Prepayments primarily relate to software licences, maintenance contracts, office lease payments and subscriptions. The balance varies depending on the timing of payment and expense recognition.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Affected line items	Variance to Budget \$'000	Explanations of major variances
Suppliers	8,686	The variance is primarily due to the timing differences between expense recognition and settlement. Settlement is usually made within 30 days of the receipt of goods and services accompanying tax invoices.
Other payables	6,489	The variance is primarily due to an increase in unearned revenue. Revenue is recognised by reference to a stage of completion of services provided. The unearned revenue balance varies depending on the timing of funding received for the services and service delivery at the reporting date.
Employee provisions	7,336	The variance primarily relates to the decline in the government bond rate and pay increase.
Other provisions	(5,978)	The variance is primarily due to the negotiated settlement of a make-good provision for the Canberra office. This provision was higher than actual cost.
Statement of Changes in Equity and Cash Flow Statement		
The above explanations of major variances to the Budget are also applicable to the Statement of Changes in Equity and the Cash Flow Statement.		

Australian Bureau of Statistics

1. Financial Performance

This section analyses the financial performance of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 2017.

1.1. Expenses

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Note 1.1A: Employee Benefits		
Wages and salaries		
ABS staff	254,203	231,918
Interviewers	13,499	13,669
Census field staff	65,351	13,199
Total wages and salaries	333,053	258,786
Superannuation		
Defined contribution plans		
ABS staff	24,219	21,050
Interviewers	1,552	1,514
Census field staff	6,266	1,203
Total defined contribution plans	32,037	23,767
Defined benefit plans		
ABS staff	20,145	24,340
Interviewers	758	817
Census field staff	108	53
Total defined benefit plans	21,011	25,210
Leave and other entitlements	8,131	13,901
Separation and redundancies	12,489	3,715
Other employee expenses	1,040	1,700
Total employee benefits	407,761	327,079

Accounting Policy

Liabilities for 'short-term employee benefits' (as defined in AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*) and termination benefits due within twelve months of the end of the reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

The nominal amount is calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability.

Other long-term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave taken in future years by employees of the ABS is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will apply at the time the leave is taken, plus the ABS' employer superannuation contribution rates and applicable on-costs, to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The liability for long service leave has been determined by reference to the work of the Australian Government Actuary as at 30 June 2017. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

An independent actuarial valuation of employee benefit liabilities is conducted every three years. The last review was performed by the Australian Government Actuary in June 2017.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Separation and Redundancy

Provision is made for separation and redundancy benefit payments. The ABS recognises a provision for termination when it has developed a detailed formal plan for the terminations and has informed those employees affected that it will carry out the terminations.

Superannuation

The ABS' staff are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS), the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap) or other elected defined contribution schemes.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance's administered schedules and notes including significant accounting judgements.

The ABS makes employer contributions to the employees' superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government, and accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions for the final fortnight of the year.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Note 1.1B: Suppliers		
Goods and services		
Consultants	3,566	5,064
Contractors	21,144	12,846
IT services and communications	19,834	15,822
Printing and subscriptions	1,587	6,515
Building expenses (excluding lease payments)	11,124	8,341
Population survey operations interviewer	4,676	4,997
Census operation costs	13,758	3,461
Recruitment and employment related	930	2,573
Stationery and postage	24,468	5,381
Travel	10,479	12,436
Training	3,894	4,792
Advertising and market research	21,288	3,431
Other	4,208	5,483
Total goods and services supplied or rendered	140,956	91,142
Goods and services are made of:		
Goods supplied	57,949	25,723
Services rendered	83,007	65,419
Total goods and services	140,956	91,142
Other suppliers		
Operating lease rentals	27,012	26,232
Workers compensation expenses	7,755	7,859
Total other suppliers	34,767	34,091
Total suppliers	175,723	125,233
Leasing commitments		
The ABS in its capacity as lessee has the following types of operating leases:		
<u>Leases for office accommodation</u>		
Lease payments are subject to annual increases which are either fixed as outlined in the rental agreement or in accordance with upwards movements in the Consumer Price Index. Office accommodation leases may be renewed for up to five years at the ABS' option following a one-off adjustment of rentals to current market levels.		
<u>Leases for the provision of motor vehicles</u>		
No contingent rentals exist. There are no renewal or purchase options available to the ABS.		
Commitments for minimum lease payments in relation to non-cancellable operating leases are payable as follows:		
Within 1 year	8,550	20,106
Between 1 to 5 years	41,810	30,586
More than 5 years	38,324	26,847
Total operating lease commitments	88,684	77,539

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Accounting Policy

Leases

Operating lease payments are expensed on a straight line basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Note 1.1C: Write-down and Impairment of Assets		
Impairment on financial instruments	8	4
Impairment on intangible assets	2,436	163
Impairment of property, plant and equipment	1,081	63
Total write-down and impairment of assets	3,525	230

1.2. Own-Source Revenue and Gains

Note 1.2A: Sale of Goods and Rendering of Services

Sale of goods	913	1,246
Rendering of services	43,444	34,577
Total sale of goods and rendering of services	44,357	35,823

Accounting Policy

Sales of goods and services include revenue from the sale of publications, other products, and the provision of statistical services.

Revenue from the sales of goods is recognised when:

- the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to the buyer;
- the ABS retains no managerial involvement or effective control over the goods;
- the revenue and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the ABS.

Revenue from rendering of services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date. The revenue is recognised when:

- the amount of revenue, stage of completion and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- the probable economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the ABS.

The stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date is determined by reference to the proportion that costs incurred to date bear to the estimated total costs of the transaction.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed at the end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable. Refer to Note 2.1A for further detail.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Note 1.2B: Other Revenue		
Resources received free of charge	224	1,729
Rental income	1,102	1,571
Other	753	147
Total other revenue	2,079	3,447

Accounting Policy

Resources received free of charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense. Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains depending on their nature.

Other revenue

Other revenue includes all miscellaneous revenue such as officer contributions, Comcover recoveries and recoveries of salary from seconded agencies.

Note 1.2C: Other Gains

Settlement	35,000	-
Other ¹	2,249	237
Total other gains	37,249	237

1.This amount includes gains on sale of assets and make-good provision settlement.

Accounting Policy

Compensatory settlement

Compensatory settlement is recognised when the recoverable amount can be reliably measured and collectability is probable.

Sale of assets

Gains from disposal of non-current assets are recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

Settlement of make-good provision

Gains from settlement of make-good provision are recognised when the estimated restoration cost is no longer required.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

2. Financial Position

This section analyses the Australian Bureau of Statistics' assets used to generate its financial performance and operating liabilities incurred as a result.

Leasehold improvements and plant and equipment are carried at fair value in accordance with AASB 13 *Fair Value Measurement*. The remaining assets and liabilities disclosed in the statement of financial position do not apply the fair value hierarchy.

Employee related information is disclosed in the People and Relationships section.

2.1. Financial Assets

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<u>Note 2.1A: Trade and Other Receivables</u>		
Appropriations receivable	95,134	59,623
Goods and services	4,937	754
GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	1,739	2,790
Other receivables	1,245	93
Total trade and other receivables (gross)	103,055	63,260
Less impairment allowance	(7)	-
Total trade and other receivables (net)	103,048	63,260

Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2016: 30 days).

All trade and other receivables are expected to be recovered in no more than 12 months.

Reconciliation of the Impairment Allowance Account:

Movements in relation to 2017

	Goods and services \$'000	Total \$'000
Opening balance		
Amounts written off	1	-
Decrease recognised in net surplus	(8)	-
Closing balance	(7)	-

Accounting Policy

Trade receivable

Trade receivables are classified as 'loans and receivable' and recorded at face value less impairment. Trade receivables are recognised where the ABS has a right to receive cash. Trade receivables are derecognised upon payment.

Appropriations receivable

Refer to Revenue from Government for accounting policy.

Impairment of financial assets

Receivables are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

2.2. Non-Financial Assets

Note 2.2A: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Plant & Equipment and Intangibles

	Leasehold improvements \$'000	Plant and equipment \$'000	Computer software ¹ \$'000	Total \$'000
As at 1 July 2016				
Gross book value	31,510	43,780	238,700	313,990
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(11,291)	(17,604)	(161,852)	(190,747)
Total as at 1 July 2016	20,219	26,176	76,848	123,243
Additions				
Purchased	292	8,838	22,771	31,901
Internally developed	-	-	13,295	13,295
Impairments recognised in net cost of services	(910)	(172)	(2,435)	(3,517)
Depreciation and amortisation	(5,126)	(10,067)	(19,231)	(34,424)
Reclassification	(2,695)	2,620	75	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Other	-	(37)	-	(37)
Total as at 30 June 2017	11,780	27,358	91,323	130,461
Total as at 30 June 2017 represented by				
Gross book value	15,833	45,804	209,777	271,414
Work in progress	987	-	8,826	9,813
Accumulated depreciation, amortisation and impairment	(5,040)	(18,446)	(127,280)	(150,766)
Total as at 30 June 2017	11,780	27,358	91,323	130,461

Australian Valuation Solutions Pty Ltd (AVS) reviewed the ABS' fair value of leasehold improvements and plant & equipment. The AVS assessed that the carrying amount of the assets did not differ materially from the fair value as at 30 June 2017.

- The carrying amount of computer software included \$34,220,885 purchased software and \$57,102,054 internally generated software.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Accounting Policy

Acquisition of Assets

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than the following thresholds, which are expensed in the year of acquisition.

Asset Class	Recognition Threshold
Plant and equipment	\$2,000
IT hardware	\$1,000

The initial cost of an asset includes an estimate of the cost of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located. This is particularly relevant to 'make good' provisions in property leases taken up by the ABS where there exists an obligation to restore the property to its original condition. These costs are included in the value of the ABS' leasehold improvements with a corresponding provision for the 'make good' recognised.

Revaluations

Following initial recognition at cost, property, plant and equipment are carried at fair value. Valuations are conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets did not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depended upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments are made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment is credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets are recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reversed a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset restated to the revalued amount.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the ABS using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation.

Depreciation rates (useful lives), residual values and methods are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable asset are based on the following useful lives:

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Leasehold improvements	Lease term	Lease term
Property, plant and equipment	5-10 years*	5-10 years*

*Within this class, Artwork and Curios have a useful life between 10-100 years.

Impairment

All assets were assessed for indications of impairment at 30 June 2017. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment loss recognised if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs of disposal and its value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from the asset. Where the future economic benefit of an asset is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows, and the asset would be replaced if the ABS were deprived of the asset, its value in use is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost.

Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

Intangibles

The ABS' intangibles comprise purchased and internally developed software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2017. Refer to Note 1.1C for further detail.

Internally Generated Software

In its role as Australia's national statistical entity, the ABS builds and maintains a significant set of internally generated software assets (IGSW) assets. These assets are added to over time, in line with the increasing range of statistical information sought by Government, business and the general community, and the increasing use of technology, particularly in relation to collection, analysis and dissemination activities.

All software developed in-house since 1 July 1994 has been capitalised. The costing methodology capitalises direct salary and on costs for programmers, general administration, and overhead costs relating to software development are not capitalised. The data capture systems in place to collect effort recording data for programmers are in line with the requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Financial Reporting) Rule 2015*.

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of intangible assets are recognised initially at cost in the statement of financial position, except for purchases costing less than the following thresholds, which are expensed in the year of acquisition.

Asset Class	Recognition Threshold
Purchased software	\$1,000
Internally generated software	\$100,000

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Amortisation

Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life.

The ABS has long term commitments to survey and data collection programs. These are supported by software packages that are required to be maintained for the same time period as the data collection and analysis programs, to ensure consistency in approach and of data treatment.

The useful lives of the ABS' software are:

	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
Computer software (purchased)	5 years*	2-14 years*
Computer software (internally generated)	5-15 years*	5-16 years*

* The above table outlines the range of life in years for computer software, however, the average life is currently 9 years (2016: 9 years).

Capital Work in Progress

Capital work in progress represents two main asset types: software assets under development, and office refurbishments. Work in progress is disclosed in the intangibles, and property, plant and equipment balances respectively.

Software assets are not amortised until the year in which the development phase is completed and the asset is operational. Where use of the asset commences after substantial completion of the development phase, but some improvements or enhancements to the system continue to be made, the date of substantial completion is treated as the date of completion and amortisation commences from that date.

2.3. Payables

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Note 2.3A: Suppliers		
Trade creditors and accruals	16,785	26,229
Operating lease rentals	4,901	5,378
Other creditors	-	10
Total suppliers payables	21,686	31,617

Settlement is usually made within 30 days.

Accounting Policy

Suppliers and Other Payables

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced). Supplier and payables are derecognised upon payment.

Note 2.3B: Other Payables

Salaries and wages	2,454	2,036
Superannuation	399	466
Separations and redundancies	1,810	957
Lease incentives	7,920	3,685
Unearned revenue	42,701	31,954
Other	363	565
Total other payables	55,647	39,663

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Accounting Policy

Salaries and wages, Superannuation, Separations and redundancies

Refer to Note 1.1A: Employee Benefits for detail.

Lease incentives

The ABS has entered into a number of accommodation leases, which include lease incentives taking the form of 'free' leasehold improvements. Under interpretation 115 *Operating Lease - Incentives*, all incentives in relation to operating leases are required to be classified as an integral part of the net consideration of the lease for the leased asset, irrespective of the incentives nature, form, or timing of payments.

Where an asset is acquired by means of an incentive under an operating lease, the asset is capitalised at the fair value of the lease incentive at the inception of the contract, and a liability is recognised at the same time, for the same amount.

Operating lease payments are expensed on a straight line basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

Unearned revenue

Unearned revenue includes revenue from provision of statistical consultancies and revenue from other agencies for statistical surveys. The unearned revenue is recognised on a stage of completion basis over the period of the provision of services as provided.

2.4. Provisions

Note 2.4A: Other Provisions

	Make good provision \$'000
As at 1 July 2016	6,120
Amounts used	(3,516)
Amounts reversed	(2,084)
<u>Unwinding of discount or change in discount rate</u>	<u>73</u>
Total as at 30 June 2017	593

The ABS currently has one agreement (2016: two) for the leasing of premises which have provisions requiring the ABS to restore the premises to their original condition at the conclusion of the lease. The ABS has made a provision to reflect the present value of this obligation.

Significant Accounting Judgements and Estimates

Make good

The ABS currently holds ten leases for office space around Australia. All of the lease agreements include a make good clause.

It is considered that one make good arrangement is likely to be exercised as it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and the amount can be reliably determined. The provision represents the estimated costs of making good leasehold premises in accordance with AASB 137 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets*.

For the remaining nine leases, it is considered probable that the make good requirement would not be exercised as it is the current intention for the ABS to leave the fittings with the premises intact for the landlord at lease end, therefore negating the requirement for a make good. These arrangements are reviewed annually.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

3. Funding

This section identifies the Australian Bureau of Statistics' funding structure.

3.1. Appropriations

Note 3.1A: Annual Appropriations ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

Departmental	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Ordinary annual services	520,363	407,815
Capital Budget ¹	20,402	20,750
Receipts retained under PGPA Act – Section 74	101,373	47,691
Equity Injections	<u>41,706</u>	<u>32,699</u>
Total appropriations	683,844	508,955
Appropriations applied (current and prior years)	<u>673,123</u>	<u>502,693</u>
Variance ²	<u>10,721</u>	<u>6,262</u>

1. Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1, 3 and 5). They form part of ordinary annual services, and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts.
2. The variances represent available current year funding less prior year funding that was expended in the current year. In 2017, \$22,000 was withheld under Section 51 of the PGPA Act and quarantined for administrative purposes. The amount is included in the above table.

Note 3.1B: Unspent Annual Appropriations ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

Departmental	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2013-14 - Non Operating - Equity Injection	-	87
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2015-16	-	51,321
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2015-16 - Capital Budget (DCB) - Non Operating	-	1,360
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2015-16 - Non Operating - Equity Injection	-	7,161
Supply Act (No. 1) 2016-2017	-	-
Supply Act (No. 1) 2016-2017 - Capital Budget (DCB) - Non Operating	-	-
Supply Act (No. 2) 2016-2017 - Non Operating - Equity Injection	5,377	-
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2016-17	73,893	-
Appropriation Act (No. 1) 2016-17- Capital Budget (DCB) - Non Operating	2,781	-
Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2016-17 - Non Operating - Equity Injection	13,083	-
Cash at bank	<u>3,763</u>	<u>9,684</u>
Total departmental	98,897	69,613

Australian Bureau of Statistics

4. People and Relationships

This section describes a range of employment and post-employment benefits provided to our people and our relationships with other key people.

4.1. Key Management Personnel Remuneration

Key management personnel (KMP) are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of the ABS.

On 10 April 2017, the ABS announced its updated governance arrangements. Before this governance arrangements update, the Executive Board was the decision making board in the ABS and KMP of the ABS were identified as the Australian Statistician and the Deputy Australian Statisticians.

Under the new governance arrangements, the Executive Board, the 2021 Census Board, and the Statistical Business Transformation (SBT) Board are decision making boards in the ABS. The ABS has determined that all official members of these boards are KMP of the ABS. Namely, the Australian Statistician; the Deputy Australian Statisticians; the General Manager Finance, Risk and Planning Division; the General Manager People, Culture and Communication Division; the General Manager Population and Social Statistics Division; two external 2021 Census Board members; and three external SBT Board members.

The Portfolio Minister and Cabinet Ministers are KMP of the ABS. The Portfolio Minister and Cabinet Ministers' remuneration and other benefits are set by the Remuneration Tribunal, not paid by the ABS, and are disclosed in the Australian Government's Consolidated Financial Statements.

KMP remuneration is reported in the table below:

	2017 \$'000
Short-term employee benefits	1,720
Board remuneration fees for external board members	6
Post-employment benefits	285
Other long-term benefits	206
Termination benefits	-
Total key management remuneration expenses¹	2,217

Short-term employee benefits include salary, motor vehicle benefits and other allowances. Post-employment benefits include superannuation. Other long-term benefits include long service leave and annual leave. Refer to the Accounting Policy section in Note 1.1A: Employee Benefits for more detail.

The total number of KMP that are included in the above table is ten, consisting of:

- The Australian Statistician
- Two Deputy Australian Statisticians
- One Deputy Australian Statistician, retired 18 April 2017
- One Acting Deputy Australian Statistician, acting KMP from 18 April 2017
- The General Manager Finance, Risk and Planning Division, KMP from 10 April 2017
- The General Manager People, Culture and Communication Division, KMP from 10 April 2017
- The General Manager Population and Social Statistics Division, KMP from 10 April 2017
- Two external SBT Board members, KMP from 10 April 2017.

1. The above KMP remuneration excludes the remuneration and other benefits of the three external board members who provided their services free of charge to the ABS.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

4.2. Related Party Disclosures

AASB 124 *Related Party Disclosures* requires the ABS to disclose transactions with its related parties. Where KMP has an association with an entity where a conflict has the potential to arise, in addition to the duty to disclose that association, the KMP absents him/herself from both the discussion and the decision-making process.

Related Party Relationships

The ABS is an Australian Government controlled entity. Related parties of the ABS include but are not limited to:

- KMP as outlined in 4.1;
- Close family members of KMP as outlined in 4.1; and
- Organisations controlled by these KMP and their close family members.

Related parties to the ABS also include the Portfolio Minister, Cabinet Ministers and other Australian Government entities.

Transactions with Related Parties

Given the breadth of Government activities, related parties may transact with the government sector in the same capacity as ordinary citizens. Such transactions include the payment or refund of taxes, receipt of a Medicare rebate or higher education loans. These transactions are not disclosed in this note.

During the financial year, there were no other loans, grants, guarantees or debts forgiven to any KMP or their close family members or organisation controlled by these KMP and/or by their close family members. Transactions with KMP related entities that occur in the normal course of the ABS' operations are incidental and conducted on terms no more favourable than similar transactions with other employees or customers. Any vendor relationships with such entities are at arm's length and comply with the ABS' procurement policy.

Other Related Parties Disclosures

- The Australian Statistician is a member of the Australian Electoral Commission (Board).
- One Deputy Australian Statistician is a member of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (Board).

Australian Bureau of Statistics

5. Managing Uncertainties

This section analyses how the Australian Bureau of Statistics manages the financial risks within its operating environment.

5.1. Contingent Assets and Liabilities

The ABS had no contingent assets or liabilities as at 30 June 2017 for departmental and administered (2016: Nil).

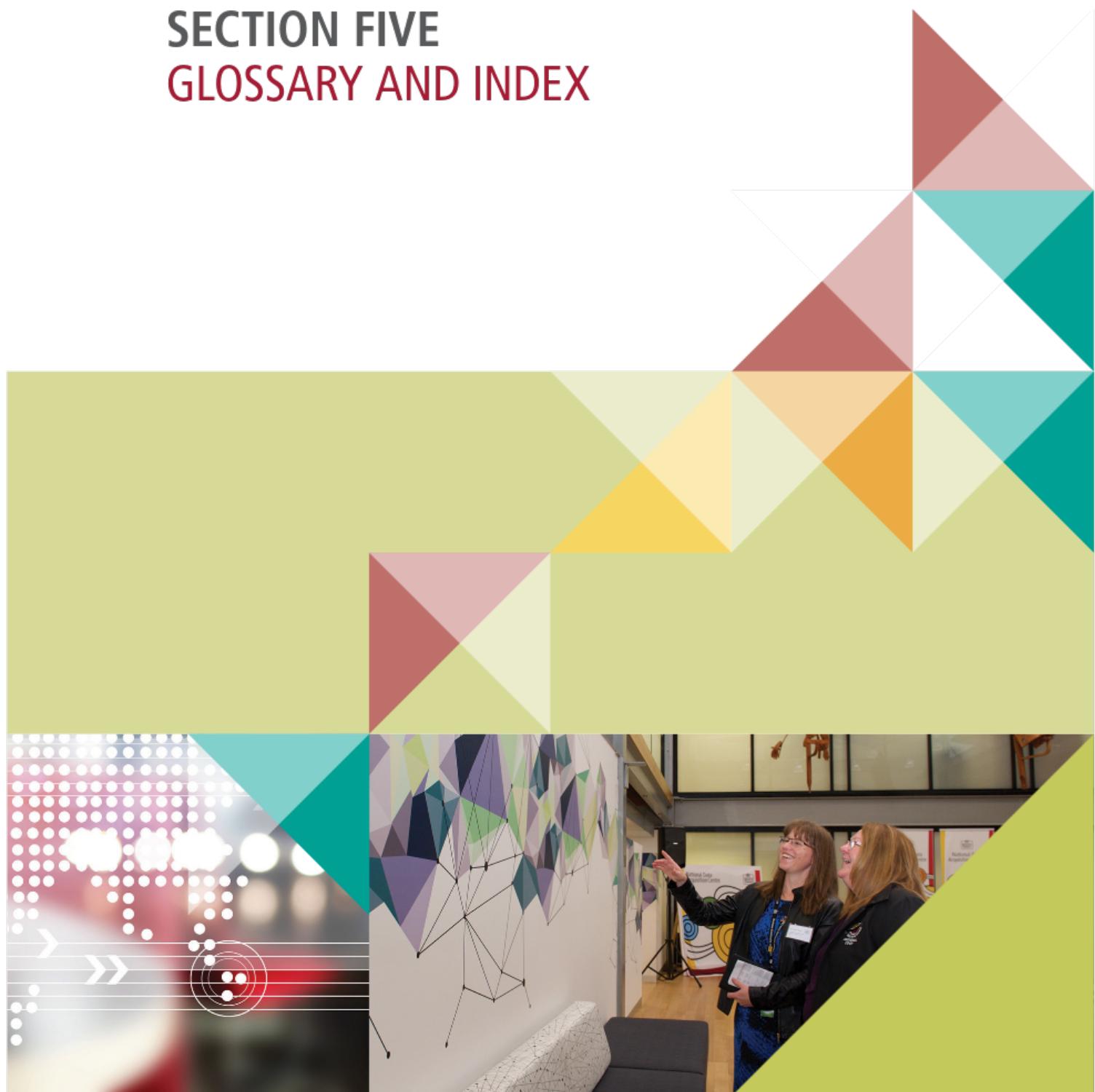
5.2. Financial Instruments

	2017 \$'000	2016 \$'000
<u>Note 5.2A: Categories of Financial Instruments</u>		
Financial Assets		
Loans and receivables		
Cash and cash equivalents	3,763	9,684
Trade and other receivables	<u>6,175</u>	<u>847</u>
Total financial assets	<u>9,938</u>	<u>10,531</u>
Financial Liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
Trade creditors and accruals	16,785	26,229
Total financial liabilities	<u>16,785</u>	<u>26,229</u>
<u>Note 5.2B: Net Losses on Financial Assets</u>		
Loans and receivables		
Impairment	8	4
Net losses on financial assets	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>



SECTION FIVE

GLOSSARY AND INDEX



List of requirements



Below is the table set out in Schedule 2 of the PGPA Rule. Section 17AJ(d) requires this table to be included in entities' annual reports as an aid of access.

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement	Page no.
17AD(g)	Letter of transmittal			
17AI	A copy of the letter of transmittal signed and dated by Accountable Authority on date final text approved, with statement that the report has been prepared in accordance with section 46 of the Act and any enabling legislation that specifies additional requirements in relation to the annual report.		Mandatory	iii
17AD(h)	Aids to access			
17AJ(a)	Table of contents.		Mandatory	v
17AJ(b)	Alphabetical index.		Mandatory	124–130
17AJ(c)	Glossary of abbreviations and acronyms.		Mandatory	121–123
17AJ(d)	List of requirements.		Mandatory	116–120
17AJ(e)	Details of contact officer.		Mandatory	iv
17AJ(f)	Entity's website address.		Mandatory	iv
17AJ(g)	Electronic address of report.		Mandatory	iv
17AD(a)	Review by Accountable Authority			
17AD(a)	A review by the Accountable Authority of the entity.		Mandatory	2–11
17AD(b)	Overview of the entity			
17AE(1)(a)(i)	A description of the role and functions of the entity.		Mandatory	13
17AE(1)(a)(ii)	A description of the organisational structure of the entity.		Mandatory	15
17AE(1)(a)(iii)	A description of the outcomes and programmes administered by the entity.		Mandatory	19–20
17AE(1)(a)(iv)	A description of the purposes of the entity as included in corporate plan.		Mandatory	13
17AE(1)(b)	An outline of the structure of the portfolio of the entity.	Portfolio departments mandatory	n/a	
17AE(2)	Where the outcomes and programs administered by the entity differ from any Portfolio Budget Statement, Portfolio Additional Estimates Statement or other portfolio estimates statement that was prepared for the entity for the period, include details of variation and reasons for change.	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a	



PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement	Page no.
17AD(c)	Report on the Performance of the entity			
	<i>Annual performance Statements</i>			
17AD(c)(i); 16F	Annual performance statement in accordance with paragraph 39(1)(b) of the Act and section 16F of the Rule.	Mandatory	30–47	
17AD(c)(ii)	<i>Report on Financial Performance</i>			
17AF(1)(a)	A discussion and analysis of the entity's financial performance.	Mandatory	2–11, 84–85, 86–113	
17AF(1)(b)	A table summarising the total resources and total payments of the entity.	Mandatory	84–85	
17AF(2)	If there may be significant changes in the financial results during or after the previous or current reporting period, information on those changes, including: the cause of any operating loss of the entity; how the entity has responded to the loss and the actions that have been taken in relation to the loss; and any matter or circumstances that it can reasonably be anticipated will have a significant impact on the entity's future operation or financial results.	If applicable, Mandatory.	85	
17AD(d)	Management and Accountability			
	<i>Corporate Governance</i>			
17AG(2)(a)	Information on compliance with section 10 (fraud systems)	Mandatory	iii, 51–54	
17AG(2)(b)(i)	A certification by Accountable Authority that fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans have been prepared.	Mandatory	iii	
17AG(2)(b)(ii)	A certification by Accountable Authority that appropriate mechanisms for preventing, detecting incidents of, investigating or otherwise dealing with, and recording or reporting fraud that meet the specific needs of the entity are in place.	Mandatory	iii, 51–54	
17AG(2)(b)(iii)	A certification by Accountable Authority that all reasonable measures have been taken to deal appropriately with fraud relating to the entity.	Mandatory	iii, 54	
17AG(2)(c)	An outline of structures and processes in place for the entity to implement principles and objectives of corporate governance.	Mandatory	50–59	
17AG(2)(d) – (e)	A statement of significant issues reported to Minister under paragraph 19(1)(e) of the Act that relates to noncompliance with Finance law and action taken to remedy noncompliance.	If applicable, Mandatory	85	
	<i>External Scrutiny</i>			
17AG(3)	Information on the most significant developments in external scrutiny and the entity's response to the scrutiny.	Mandatory	56–57	
17AG(3)(a)	Information on judicial decisions and decisions of administrative tribunals and by the Australian Information Commissioner that may have a significant effect on the operations of the entity.	If applicable, Mandatory	56	
17AG(3)(b)	Information on any reports on operations of the entity by the Auditor General (other than report under section 43 of the Act), a Parliamentary Committee, or the Commonwealth Ombudsman.	If applicable, Mandatory	56	

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement	Page no.
17AG(3)(c)	Information on any capability reviews on the entity that were released during the period.	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a	
<i>Management of Human Resources</i>				
17AG(4)(a)	An assessment of the entity's effectiveness in managing and developing employees to achieve entity objectives.	Mandatory	60–81	
17AG(4)(b)	Statistics on the entity's APS employees on an ongoing and nonongoing basis; including the following:	Mandatory	60–81	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics on staffing classification level; • Statistics on fulltime employees; • Statistics on parttime employees; • Statistics on gender; • Statistics on staff location; • Statistics on employees who identify as Indigenous. 			
17AG(4)(c)	Information on any enterprise agreements, individual flexibility arrangements, Australian workplace agreements, common law contracts and determinations under subsection 24(1) of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> .	Mandatory	75–76	
17AG(4)(c)(i)	Information on the number of SES and nonSES employees covered by agreements etc identified in paragraph 17AG(4)(c).	Mandatory	75–76	
17AG(4)(c)(ii)	The salary ranges available for APS employees by classification level.	Mandatory	76–77	
17AG(4)(c)(iii)	A description of nonsalary benefits provided to employees.	Mandatory	n/a	
17AG(4)(d)(i)	Information on the number of employees at each classification level who received performance pay.	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a	
17AG(4)(d)(ii)	Information on aggregate amounts of performance pay at each classification level.	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a	
17AG(4)(d)(iii)	Information on the average amount of performance payment, and range of such payments, at each classification level.	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a	
17AG(4)(d)(iv)	Information on aggregate amount of performance payments.	If applicable, Mandatory	n/a	
<i>Assets Management</i>				
17AG(5)	An assessment of effectiveness of assets management where asset management is a significant part of the entity's activities.	If applicable, mandatory	59	
<i>Purchasing</i>				
17AG(6)	An assessment of entity performance against the <i>Commonwealth Procurement Rules</i> .	Mandatory	58	
<i>Consultants</i>				
17AG(7)(a)	A summary statement detailing the number of new contracts engaging consultants entered into during the period; the total actual expenditure on all new consultancy contracts entered into during the period (inclusive of GST); the number of ongoing consultancy contracts that were entered into during a previous reporting period; and the total actual expenditure in the reporting year on the ongoing consultancy contracts (inclusive of GST).	Mandatory	58	



PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement	Page no.
17AG(7)(b)	A statement that “ <i>During [reporting period], [specified number] new consultancy contracts were entered into involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]. In addition, [specified number] ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the period, involving total actual expenditure of \$[specified million]</i> ”.		Mandatory	58
17AG(7)(c)	A summary of the policies and procedures for selecting and engaging consultants and the main categories of purposes for which consultants were selected and engaged.		Mandatory	58
17AG(7)(d)	A statement that “ <i>Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website.</i> ”		Mandatory	58
<i>Australian National Audit Office Access Clauses</i>				
17AG(8)	If an entity entered into a contract with a value of more than \$100 000 (inclusive of GST) and the contract did not provide the Auditor General with access to the contractor’s premises, the report must include the name of the contractor, purpose and value of the contract, and the reason why a clause allowing access was not included in the contract.		If applicable, Mandatory	n/a
<i>Exempt contracts</i>				
17AG(9)	If an entity entered into a contract or there is a standing offer with a value greater than \$10 000 (inclusive of GST) which has been exempted from being published in AusTender because it would disclose exempt matters under the FOI Act, the annual report must include a statement that the contract or standing offer has been exempted, and the value of the contract or standing offer, to the extent that doing so does not disclose the exempt matters.		If applicable, Mandatory	58
<i>Small business</i>				
17AG(10)(a)	A statement that “[Name of entity] supports small business participation in the Commonwealth Government procurement market. Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Small Enterprise participation statistics are available on the Department of Finance’s website.”		Mandatory	58
17AG(10)(b)	An outline of the ways in which the procurement practices of the entity support small and medium enterprises.		Mandatory	58
17AG(10)(c)	If the entity is considered by the Department administered by the Finance Minister as material in nature – a statement that “[Name of entity] recognises the importance of ensuring that small businesses are paid on time. The results of the Survey of Australian Government Payments to Small Business are available on the Treasury’s website.”		If applicable, Mandatory	58
<i>Financial Statements</i>				
17AD(e)	Inclusion of the annual financial statements in accordance with subsection 43(4) of the Act.		Mandatory	86–113

PGPA Rule Reference	Part of Report	Description	Requirement	Page no.
17AD(f)	Other Mandatory Information			
17AH(1)(a)(i)	If the entity conducted advertising campaigns, a statement that <i>"During [reporting period], the [name of entity] conducted the following advertising campaigns: [name of advertising campaigns undertaken]. Further information on those advertising campaigns is available at [address of entity's website] and in the reports on Australian Government advertising prepared by the Department of Finance. Those reports are available on the Department of Finance's website."</i>		If applicable, Mandatory	59
17AH(1)(a)(ii)	If the entity did not conduct advertising campaigns, a statement to that effect.		If applicable, Mandatory	n/a
17AH(1)(b)	A statement that <i>"Information on grants awarded by [name of entity] during [reporting period] is available at [address of entity's website]."</i>		If applicable, Mandatory	n/a
17AH(1)(c)	Outline of mechanisms of disability reporting, including reference to website for further information.		Mandatory	63–66
17AH(1)(d)	Website reference to where the entity's Information Publication Scheme statement pursuant to Part II of FOI Act can be found.		Mandatory	55
17AH(1)(e)	Correction of material errors in previous annual report		If applicable, mandatory	n/a
17AH(2)	Information required by other legislation		Mandatory	55–56

Glossary



AAs	Accountable Authority Instructions
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABS cat. no.	ABS catalogue number uniquely identifies each title in the ABS product range http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/web+pages/Interpret+ABS+Catalogue+Numbers
ABS Stats App	Application that enables access to key economic indicators. Further details are at www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/Home/Mobile?OpenDocument
ABW	activity based working
Accredited Integrating Authority	Accredited Integrating Authorities are authorised to undertake high risk data integration projects involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes. Further details are at http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Statistical+Data+Integration+-+ABS+Integrating+Authority+information
ACLD	Australian Census Longitudinal Dataset
AND	Australian Network on Disability
ANU	Australian National University
APS	Australian Public Service
APSC	Australian Public Service Commission
ASAC	Australian Statistics Advisory Council
ASD	Australian Signals Directorate
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
BITRE	Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics
BLADE	Business Longitudinal Analysis Data Environment
CALD	culturally and linguistically diverse
CDC	Canberra Data Centre
CDEP	Community Development Employment Projects
Census	Census of Population and Housing, conducted every five years under the authority of the <i>Census and Statistics Act 1905</i> . The Census aims to measure accurately the number of people and dwellings in Australia on Census Night, and a range of their key characteristics.
Census PES	Census Post-Enumeration Survey. This is conducted after every Census to measure Census quality and produce high quality population estimates.

Commonwealth arrangements	Arrangements by which Commonwealth entities are authorised to undertake high risk data integration projects involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes. Further details are at http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Statistical+Data+Integration+-+ABS+Integrating+Authority+information
CMS	ABS Collection Management System
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CPI	Consumer Price Index
data integration	Bringing information from different sources together for statistical and research purposes.
DataLab	Facility delivering remote access to data and increased ability to handle large datasets with faster processing through new /external servers. Further details at www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/CURF:+About+the+ABS+Data+Laboratory+(ABSDL)
Data61	A data innovation group, specialising in data science and engineering
DDoS attack	distributed denial of service attack (against websites)
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
digital-first	2016 Census strategy aimed at encouraging greater use of online approaches to all aspects of Census operations and delivery
DIIS	Department of Industry, Innovation and Science
DIPA	Data Integration Partnership for Australia
DLCD	Dynamic Land Cover Data
DRC	Disclosure Review Committee
DSBB	Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)
dwelling	A dwelling is a structure which is intended to have people live in it, and which is habitable on Census night. Some examples of dwellings are houses, motels, flats, caravans, prisons, tents, humpies and houseboats. Further details are at http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2901.0Chapter29702016
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
EL	Executive Level
ELG	Executive Leadership Group
EMS	Environmental Management System
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
ESAG	Economic Statistics Advisory Group
FOI Act	<i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>
FTE	full-time equivalent (employees)
FWE	Flexible working environments strategy
GA	Geoscience Australia
GLIDE	Graphically-Linked Information Discovery Environment
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HSR	Health and Safety Representative
HR	human resources

IAGDP	Indigenous Australian Government Development Program
IAP	Independent Assurance Panel, which consists of eminent Australian and international experts to provide extra assurance and transparency of Census data quality. The full report can be found at www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3310114.nsf/home/Independent+Assurance+Panel+\$File/CIAP+Report+on+the+quality+of+2016+Census+data.pdf
ICT	information and communications technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPS	Information Publication Scheme
ICT	information and communications technology
JCPAA	Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (parliamentary committee)
LGBTI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex
MAC	Methodology Advisory Committee
MADIP	Multi-agency Data Integration Project
MFD	multi-function device
N/A	not applicable
NationalMap	Hosted by the data.gov.au website, offers a platform for discovering and visualising a broad range of government and non-government datasets across various geographies of Australia.
NHSC	National Health & Safety Committee
outposted	An ABS officer posted to another agency
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statement
PGPA Act	<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013</i>
PIMS	ABS Provider Information Management System
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan
PSSAG	Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group
RMS	Rehabilitation Management System
s.	section (legislation)
SBT Program	Statistical Business Transformation Program
SCH	Statistical Clearing House
SDDS	Special Data Dissemination Standard
SDMX API	Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange Application Programming Interface
SEEA	System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (UN)
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SES	Senior Executive Service
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMG	Senior Management Group
SSF	State Statistical Forum
WHS	work health and safety
WHS Act	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i>

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